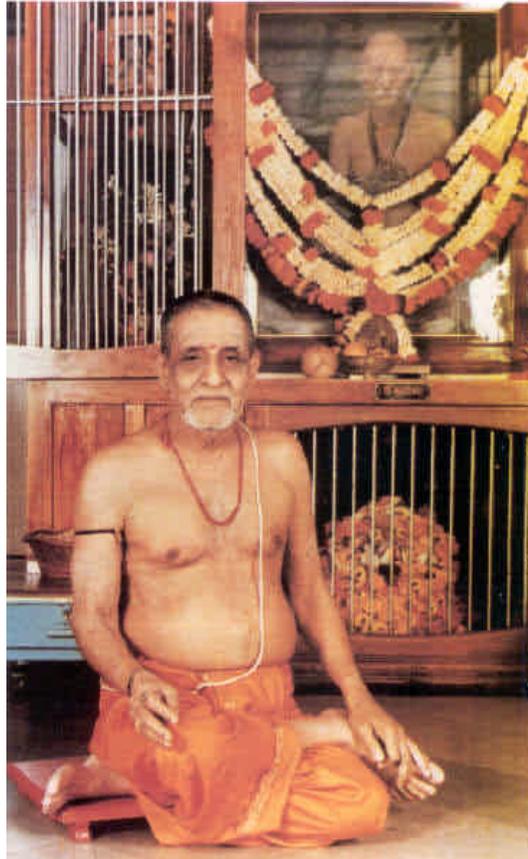


A short biography of

**“Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj”**



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First Edition

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*Anantakoti  
Brahmanda Nayaka  
Rajadhiraj  
Yogiraj  
Shree Sadguru  
Digambardas Maharaj  
Ki Jai*

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## Preface

In keeping with the tradition of Swaroop Sampradaya [a sect, wherein the aspirant concentrates on viewing the 'Atman' – the soul]. [Shree Sadguru Ramanand Beedkar Maharaj](#) took birth to become the disciple of his disciple of Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj and in this birth; he came to be known as:

**"Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj"**

## Birth

On October 17, 1912, in a small village Pomendi (Budruk), which is in a coastal province of Konkan and 12 Kms. from the city of Ratnagiri of Maharashtra State in Western India, a son was born to a couple Shri.Ganesh Vishnu Joshi & Smt. Janakibai. The child was named **Vitthal Ganesh Joshi** and later came to be known as **Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj** alias **Shree Sahajanand Saraswati** alias **Shree Maharaj**.

## Penance - Initiation

Since his childhood, he was completely detached from the worldly matters. At the tender age of 18 during 1929-30, he left his home in search of a Guru (preceptor). He came to Pune, Maharashtra State, Western India and stayed at the Muth (temple-shrine) established by [Shree Sadguru Beedkar Maharaj](#) and started rigorous tapasya [penance]. It was here that he was blessed with the graciousness by [Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe](#). Shree Baba Maharaj initiated him into the Swaroop Sampradaya and made him the apostle of the sect.

Later Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj worked for a shortwhile as a medical representative. Soon he left it, went back to Ratnagiri, and started his rigorous tapasya (penance).

## Blessed with graciousness by Shree Baba Maharaj

On July 24, 1953, when he had gone to offer his obeisances to Shree Baba Maharaj, Shree Baba Maharaj removed from his finger a ring having the pattern of serpent's head and put it round the index finger of the right hand of Shree Maharaj and said "the ring from a preceptor's finger has been put back in the finger of the preceptor only. Vithoba (Shree Maharaj), right from this moment I have taken all the conceit (ego) of yours. Henceforth you will not do anything of yours. Rather, I will perform my role on your behalf." Then Shree Baba Maharaj ordered him to propagate the Swaroop Sampradaya amongst the discerning persons.

About a year later, on August 18, 1954, Shree Baba Maharaj took Mahasamadhi [the last conscious communion with God].

## Erection of Temple -shrine of Shree Baba Maharaj

Last rites of [Shree Baba Maharaj](#) were performed at Plot No. 937-D, Chatashrunji Road, Shivaji Nagar, Pune, Maharashtra State, Western India - a place which Baba Maharaj had owned. Though his devotees decided to build His Samadhi [temple-shrine], no one was ready to shoulder the responsibility. Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj took upon himself the entire responsibility. At the site of the Samadhi [temple-shrine], a neat temple structure was erected. The atmosphere in the temple shrine was made very lively and full of devotion by various celebrations like the birthday, death anniversary of Baba Maharaj, Shree Datta Jayanti, Shree Swami Samarth Jayanti. etc. He attracted a lot of

devotees of Shree Baba Maharaj and for their welfare he worked relentlessly organizing various programmes and functions to spread the holy messages of Hindu religion, morality and devotion.

### **Extraordinary Personality**

His personality was extraordinarily pleasing, powerful and imposing. His discipline, his ever alertness, his very keen sense of observation and his meticulous planning etc were of such supreme standard that it would be almost impossible for anyone to emulate him. He was like an ocean of Mercy. The phrase "**Harder than a stone yet more tender than a flower**" could aptly describe Shree Maharaj's personality.

### **Master of 64 Arts**

Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj had the knowledge of all the 64 Kalas (Arts). Some of these Kalas [Arts] are classical music, Astrology, Astronomy, Agriculture, Drama, Painting, Veterinary Science, Architecture etc. He had the command over many languages like Marathi, Gujarathi, Konkani, Kannada, Bengali etc. When he delivered spiritual discourses, the audience listened with rapt attention and would be soaked in devotion.

### **Preached Sanatan Arya Vedic Dharma**

He always practiced and advocated the preachings of the Sanatan Arya Vedic Dharma (The original form of Hindu religion based purely on the Holiest Hindu scriptures - the four Vedas). These preachings advised simple living and detachment from the material world, sacrifice for the wellbeing of others and experience of God's existence in all the living beings etc.

### **Eternal principle of Righteousness**

In the past, Bhagwan Vyasa Maharshi while commenting on YugaDharma [the eternal principle of righteousness or religion that uphold all creation] has clearly stated that the abode of Dharma Mandir [temple of righteousness or religion] is in the heart of human being and the foundation of this mandir is in one's stomach. We have forgotten this important maxim. The real meaning of Karma [actions] or selfless service has been shown to the world by Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj by practising it through the work he undertook at [Dervan](#), Pune & Mumbai.

Further Bhagwan Vyasa Maharshi states:

***"Ashanam Vasanam Vaasah Yeshaam Chaivaavyavasthitam!  
Magdhen Samaa Kashi Gangaapyangaaravaahini !!"***

This means that for one, who does not get adequate food, clothing and shelter, for one, sacred places like Kashi (Banaras) and Magadha are alike. Similarly, pure water of river Ganga would be like burning embers to one. In short, one would not be in a position to understand the spiritual teachings, human values etc. unless one's basic needs are satisfied. Providing the necessities of life is a must for spiritual, intellectual or material well being. With this aim Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj established two trusts viz. Shree Seetarambua Walawalkar Charitable Trust at Shree Kshetra Dervan, Taluka - Chiplun, District – Ratnagiri, Maharashtra State, Western India and Shree Vitthalrao Joshi Charities Trusts at Pune city, Pune District, Maharashtra State, Western India. Through these trusts, Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj carried out the numerous religious, educational and social activities for the upliftment of the masses.

Shree Swami Shivanand of Hrishikesh, Shree Anandamaye Maa, Shree SaiBaba's disciple Shree Rambaba, Shree Gagangiri Maharaj, Shrimad Jagadguru Shankaracharya Bharateetirth of Shringeri Peeth (sect) and many others had often expressed their respect for Shree Digambardas Maharaj.

### **Retention of tradition of Vedic Learning**

In 1982, with the express intention of retaining the rich past and tradition of Vedic [regarding Holiest Hindu scriptures] learning, he set up a school imparting the Vedas in Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe temple Shrine in Pune. At present about thirty students are being taught the Vedas [Holiest Hindu scriptures] and sacrificial ceremonies, [Shree Vitthalrao Joshi Charities Trust](#) has shouldered the responsibility of providing the trainees with residence, food, clothes and medicines in the temple-shrine itself. The trust also makes provision for the honorarium to the teachers and scholarships to the pupils.

He performed various Yagnyas [religious rites as per the four Vedas] every year to ensure that the respect and gratitude towards the Vedas and Brahmins who protect them, be developed in the common man so that people perform their duties as laid down by the four Vedas.

### **Shiv Samarth Gad**

### **Devotion to Shree Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj**

His devotion to the Maratha King of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, [Shri Chhatrapathi Shivaji Maharaj](#) was total. No words would be adequately describing his sense of deep reverence and pride for the great king. Those who considered him like a deity would call Shri Chhatrapathi Shivaji Maharaj as Shivprabhu. The thoughts that his country should witness the reincarnation of personalities of the stature of [Shri Ramdas Swami](#) and Shri Chhatrapathi Shivaji Maharaj thereby rekindling and restoring the people's pride in Hindu faith, that the Hindu community which was in majority should get well-organized and united; that this community should solve its problem through its own ability and strength had taken deep roots in his mind. It was his earnest desire that again his country should assume the role of world-preceptor. It was this desire that prompted him to get built a fortress-like structure called [Shiv Samarth Gad](#) at Dervan.

### **To follow footprints left by King Shivaji to return the culture of Maharashtra**

Signboards with instructions to the effect that while visiting [Shree Kshetra Dervan](#) as well as the temple-shrine at Pune, the women devotees must come in six yards or nine yards sarees, have been installed at three places of worship. This in fact is Shree Maharaj's command. Nine yards sarees have remained the traditional dress of women of Maharashtra. Yet, with changing times the six yards became the acceptable alternative. But any change beyond this limit, Shree Maharaj thought would prove detrimental to the Aryan-Vedic religious culture, which had a rich past. A woman should not transgress the limits of behavior and should always dress in a dignified way. Only chastity and fidelity to her husband would be a woman's protectors. If the society is to be protected from the dangers unleashed by loose morals, women should develop in themselves as sense of hatred for seducing dresses. Only through the inculcation of high morals coupled with the efforts in character building; that the next generation can be moulded the right way enabling itself to follow the footprints left by King Shivaji upon the sands of high morals of this nation. It would be this teaching of his that Shree Maharaj would put forth before the society.

During the various ceremonies and celebrations of various religious places run by the trusts, jobs like cutting fruits, Arati (to sing compositions praising the God), preparing Vidas (rolls of leaf of pepper-

betel with areca-nut cloves, lime etc. enclosed in it) would be entrusted to those women only, who were ready to do this work wearing nine-yards sarees. He had made it almost obligatory for male volunteers to wear Dhosis (a garment of males worn around the waist passing under and tucked behind).

### **Patriotism**

Shree Maharaj's patriotism would match with the intensity of his unflinching faith in his religion. During 1940-42, Shree Maharaj, besides participating in the freedom struggle had organized people through his wanderings that took him to many villages. Thus, he had contributed appreciably to the freedom movement. He had also some meetings with the great freedom fighter **Shri Vinayak Damodar Sawarkar**.

Shree Maharaj would shun publicity of every sort. He had tremendous contempt for injustice. He would not compromise with self-honour. His whole self symbolized fearlessness. Whatever work he would undertake, it would be accomplished perfectly. Indeed, he was a genius possessing the ability of discernment and to top it all, he has the rarest and most important quality of being a man of action very much down to earth.

### **Mahasamaadhi**

Shree Sadguru Digambar Das Maharaj took Mahasamadhi [the last conscious communion with God] on May 21, 1989 in Pune.

||Swami Samarth||

**Part I**

*The life of an Avatar ...*

*Shree Maharaj says "There is no difference between Shree Baba Maharaj and Shree Swami Samarth, both are one, and as such Baba's samadhi mandir will become one more akkalkot"*

*"Given herein is a gist of events captured from the Great Avatar's life starting from his childhood until his Mahasamadhi and beyond, keeping in mind that the Sadguru's life is as vast as the universe and hence impossible to fathom and document"*

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## Konkan-Land of Saints - birthplace

Shree Sadguru Vitthalrao Ganesh Joshi, alias Shree Maharaj alias Shree Sadguru Digambaradas Maharaj, also known as Shree Sahajanand Saraswati, was born on October 17,1912(Ashwin Shuddha Ashtami), in a small village Pomendi (Budruk) to a devout and virtuous couple Shri Ganesh Vishnu Joshi and Smt. Janakibai.

This village Pome ndi (Budruk) located on a slope of a hill is a costal province of Konkan and 12 km.s from the city of Ratnagiri of Maharashtra State in Western India. Konkan is also known as a Land of Saints. Adorned by vast dense tree rows, the water canals flowing round the year, the cocoanut and betalnut tree gardens as well as the abundance of fruits and flowers in the spring season add beauty and splendour to Konkan.

## Family Background

Shree Laxmikeshav and Shree 'Jogeshwari' are the family God and Goddess of Shri Joshi family. Shree Rameshwar is the tutelary deity of the Village Pomendi(Budruk). The temple of the deity is located on the border of the village. Customary festivals of the Village Pomendi(Budruk), such as Navratra(the festival of nine days and nine nights), Devdiwali, Shimaga(Holi festival celebrated in the month of Falgun-March or April), Gondhal(A tumultous festivity in propitiation of a Goddess) etc., were being celebrated in this temple of Shree Rameshwar Deity.

Shri Nakdeo, Shri Kandeo and Shri Dhakdeo were the three founders of the original Joshi family. The Three houses belonging to these three founders of Joshi family still exist in Pomendi (Budruk).

This Joshi family was the renter (one who pays rent) of the village Pomendi (Budruk). The entire administration and works of the village was divided into sections and allotted to the three founders of the Joshi family for smooth management. The third founder of the Joshi family Shri Dhakdeo was allotted the temple management. Since this third Joshi family was looking after the village temples, it developed natural involvement in God devotion and other religious matters. In such a religious and virtuous family of Shri Dhakdeo, Shree Maharaj (Shree Digambaradas Maharaj) took birth.

Shri Sakharampant Joshi was the great grand father of Shree Maharaj. Shri Vishnu Sakharampant Joshi was the grandfather Shree Maharaj. Shri Hari Sakharam pant Joshi was the grandfather's brother of Shree Maharaj.

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## Family Tree

a) Great Grand Father—Shri Sakharampant Joshi had three sons vizly.

- 1) Shri Hari (Tatya)
- 2) Shri Kashinath
- 3) Shri Vishnu.

Shri Hari (Tatya) had one daughter Anusuya and one son Shridhar, adopted.(The son Dattatreya of Shri Ganeshpant(Bhau),adopted)

Shri Kashinath had no issue.

Shri Vishnupant had two sons, Shri Ganesh (Bhau) and Shri Laxman.

b) Grand Father\_\_\_Shri Vishnu Sakharampant, The grand father of Shree Maharaj had two sons

Shri Ganesh (Bhau)

Shri Laxman

c) Shri Ganesh(Bhau) had six children.

Mahadev

Dattatreya---adopted by Shri Hari(Tatya)

Vithabai

Narayan

Vitthal (ShreeMaharaj)

Godubai.

Shri Laxman had two children—

---

## 2 Tai

Shri Sakharampant Joshi, the great grandfather of Shree Maharaj was the Village Head. Since there was poverty in the family, his sons, Shri Vishnupant and Shri Haripant had to collect alms (madhukari) on a weekly basis for completion of their education.

Shri Vishnu Sakharampant the grand father of Shree Maharaj, served for some time in Railways at Mumbai (Bombay). Later on he was made to leave his job and come back to Pomendi (Budruk) to manage the agricultural land and farms.

Shri Haripant (Tatya) the brother of the grand father of Shree Maharaj being a lawyer, stayed in Ratnagiri to carry on his profession.

At Pomendi (Budruk) besides looking after the family affairs agricultural land and farms, Shri Vishnupant also managed Village affairs as Village Head. He managed all the problems regarding village land, repairs to temples etc, with the active help and cooperation of brother Shri Haripant.

Smt. Laxmibai the wife of Shri Vishnupant, who hailed from the family of Shri Godbole of village chinchkari, was highly devoted to God and also a chaste and dutiful wife. She gave birth to two sons and one daughter.

Shri Haripant (Tatya), besides being a lawyer was also a statesman, efficient and very intelligent. He was a devotee of Shree Ram Prabhu and Lord Shiva. He carried out a lot of charitable works. His wife Smt. Anandibai gave birth to a daughter Anusuya. Since he was not having a son, he adopted Shri Dattatreya, the grand son of his brother Shri Vishnupant. After adoption, he was named as "Shridhar Hari". His daughter Anusuya was married to Shri Narayan Keshav Ranade, the disciple of Shree Sadguru Beedkar Maharaj.

## Parents

Shri Ganesh Vishnu Joshi and Smt. Janakibai are the parents of Shree Maharaj. Shri Ganesh Vishnu Joshi; the father of Shree Maharaj was a great devotee of Lord Rama, always sticking to truth and honesty. He was kind hearted with clean behaviour. In his lifetime, he took care not to harm anybody in act, speech and thought.

Smt. Janakibai, the mother of Shree Maharaj left this mundane world on Shaka 1846 Chaitra Shuddha Saptami (April 1925 as per English Calendar) She was a virtuous, chaste and dutiful wife. When she was sick and lying on bed for a number of years before leaving this world, she used to continuously chant the name of God and think of God only. The proof of her chastity was observed even after funeral rites vizly. The bangles, the mangasutra (the marriage string of gold and glass beads), the small folds of her saree and the coconut were all found intact.

### Birth and Childhood

Shri Raosaheb Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe (Shree Baba Maharaj) was the sadguru of Shree Maharaj and Shri Beedkar Maharaj was the Sadguru of Shree Baba Maharaj. Shree Baba Maharaj was employed in PWD. During 1910 to 1911, after marriage, Shree Baba Maharaj was transferred to Ratnagiri, Maharashtra state. Since, he was normally absorbed in Divine contemplation, his Sadguru Shree Beedkar Maharaj was worried about his stay in Ratnagiri. Hence in consultation with his friend Shri Vishnupant Bodas, who was also the father-in-law of Shree Baba Maharaj, Sadguru Shree Beedkar Maharaj arranged for the stay including meals of Shri Baba Maharaj, in the house of Shri Hari Sakharam Joshi, at Ratnagiri. Shri Hari Sakharam Joshi was an advocate of Ratnagiri and also the brother of the Grand father of Shree Maharaj.

Since due service, was given by Joshi family to a divine person like Shree Baba Maharaj who was the incarnation of Akkalkot niwasi Shree Swami Samarth, Shree Beedkar Maharaj, the Sadguru of Shree Baba Maharaj, took birth in this Joshi family for the complete upliftment of that family. Thus Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj became the cause for the incarnation of Shree Maharaj.

A son was born to the couple Shri Ganesh Vishnu Joshi and Smt. Janakibai on October 17, 1912. The boy was named as Vitthal who came to be known as Shree Digambar Das Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj. In the childhood Shree Maharaj suffered from severe dropsy (A disease with watery liquid collecting in the body) Somehow he came out of the disease and it appeared as though it was a rebirth for Shree Maharaj. Again in the childhood, while playing he was seriously injured in between the eyebrows due to the piercing of a wooden piece. Shree Maharaj came out of this injury also. Shri Joshi family always worship Lord Rama. From childhood itself Shree Maharaj (Chi.Vitthal) used to get engrossed in the worship of Lord Rama and Lord Hanuman.

### Desire for meeting God

From the very childhood Shree Maharaj had a strong desire to meet God. The family background was favourable. He was more attracted towards meditation and recitation of God's name than the normal school education. Even in young age, he was not interested in playing like other children. He had a strong liking towards association of saintly people. Instead of schoolbooks he developed a liking for reading books on saints and life history of great people. For hours together he used to be absorbed in worshipping God with all cleanliness, neatness and full of devotion.

One would notice his concentration and deep devotion in the worship of God. During the worship of God, he used to put the dots of sandal paste exactly in the centre of the forehead of the idols in a very neat way. He would decorate the idols with flowers in almost methodical and artistic way. He would not like the flower petals, leaves of the holy basil and durva grass scattered near the place of worship. He would take care to see that only the best of the things, like flowers, leaves of the holy basil and durva grass, were offered to God during worship. On the whole the worship of God carried out by Shree Maharaj would be worth seeing and most attractive.

Sadguru Shree Beedkar Maharaj's disciple Shri Narayan Keshav Ranade was the husband of Shree Maharaj's cousin paternal aunt. Shree Maharaj right from childhood was associated with Shri Ranade. On account of Shri Ranade, Shree Maharaj came across the biography of Shree Beedkar Maharaj. Also here in Ratnagiri, at the young age of 12-13 years, Shree Maharaj was benefited to get the blessings of the Saint Shree Narayan Maharaj Kedgaonkar, favoured with a coconut.

### **Shree Maharaj Blessed By Shree Gadge Maharaj.**

Shree Gadge Maharaj was a great saint during that time. When Shree Gadge Maharaj came to Ratnagiri, Shree Maharaj with the kind permission of his father utilised this opportunity to meet Shree Gadge Maharaj. When Shree Maharaj went to get his blessings, it was the rest time of Shree Gadge Maharaj. At that time he was putting up in front of Lord Maruti Temple with a businessman Shri Berade. Shree Maharaj silently entered that house from the back door and went upto the place where Shree Gadge Maharaj was taking rest and firmly caught hold of his feet. Shree Gadge Maharaj never allowed anybody to touch his feet. If anybody by chance is successful in touching his feet, he was to beat him with his stick in hand. Knowing this terrible angry habit, the devotees used to pay obeisance from a distance to avoid the beating by the stick. When Shree Maharaj touched and grasped both the feet of Shree Gadge Maharaj by his delicate hands, Shree Gadge Maharaj came to know that his feet have been grasped with great devotion by the delicate hands of a young boy. He displayed great anger and raised his stick to beat the boy and roared "I shall kill you" Shree Maharaj answered in a voice full of devotion "If you kill

me, I shall get liberation at your feet”By hearing this tender voice with full devotion, the revengeful attitude, the false anger and the false angry facial mask of Shree Gadge Maharaj disappeared within a moment and he held Shree Maharaj with both hands and raised him up with full affection and said”Young man, who taught you all this?” Shree Maharaj without wasting a moment, spoke fearlessly but with due regard, in clear words “Nobody taught me all this. This I have inherited from birth”

Shree Gadge Maharaj was marvelled towards this fearless, sharp and intelligent boy. He delightedly laughed and spoke to this young”Vitthal” “Young boy what do you want?” Shri Vitthal (Shree Maharaj) spoke-“ I donot want anything else. Please be kind enough to clear my question and doubt. I will be very happy” Shree Gadge Maharaj asked, “What is your question?” Shree Maharaj spoke” Baba, the cotton has been converted into the thread. It has been strongly twisted. Is it possible to eliminate these twists and reconvert the thread into the original cotton?. Please teach me this lore. I don’t want anything else.

Shree Gadge Maharaj delightedly laughed. He realised the age-old relationships of previous births. He immediately embraced Shree Maharaj with great love and affection and assured him,

“it is possible. That strongly twisted thread will be reconverted to the original cotton and that is certain. That is your good fortune!. Your Guru is very great. Do not worry about anything. In appropriate time, you will meet your Guru.” By saying so, Shree Gadge Maharaj blessed Shree Maharaj and returned the cocoanut and sweets to Shree Maharaj.After this incident, Shree Maharaj used to pay obeisance to Shree Gadge Maharaj on every opportunity.

### Divine vision of Lord Hanuman

Shree Maharaj often used to come to Mumbai and on these occasions would go to Kalbadevi, South Mumbai, to pay obeisance to Shree Gadge Maharaj and used to take Bhajiaas (a tasty preparation of Gram flour, onion, chilli, fried in oil), which was a favourite of Shree Gadge Maharaj. Both used to go to Girgaum sea beach in Mumbai, Worli sea beach in Mumbai and sometimes they used to go and sit in a lonely place. They used to wander depending upon their mood. On one of these occasions, both of them were sitting on a lonely small hillock of the Worli sea beach. Shree Gadge Maharaj was in a delightful mood and spoke to Shree Maharaj” I will show you a funny thing! See I am sitting before you.”

Shree Maharaj was surprised and was looking at him and within a moment, he saw in place of Shree Gadge Maharaj, a magnificent, divine and lustrous Lord Hanuman. By looking at that magnificent and gigantic appearance of Lord Hanuman, Shree Maharaj lost his consciousness. When he regained his consiciousness, Shree Maharaj found that his head was resting on the lap of Shree Gadge Maharaj and Shree Gadge Maharaj was fondling him. While

recollecting this incident, the affection for Shree Gadge Maharaj used to choke the throat of Shree Maharaj and instantly he used to salute Shree Gadge Maharaj. He used to say "The saint Shree Gadge Maharaj had recognised the real God in the common public. He served the humanity by his devoted, loyal and pure behaviour and set an example for the future generation. He won the public heart by his selfless love and wherever he went, common public followed him with faith. He made the common public to follow righteous and virtuous path and spread the message of the greatness of the devotion to God amongst them.

### Search for sadguru (preceptor), first attempt

Since young age, Shree Maharaj (Shree Vitthal) was in good company, fond of reading good books about Saints. He developed a craving for meeting the Sadguru (preceptor). Hence he thought of leaving the house and go in search for the Sadguru. These thoughts got translated into action and he finally decided to leave the house. In that young age, he took twentyone rupees from his house and kept a small note for his parents. Then he left Ratnagiri and via Mumbai reached Nasik. He went to the temple of Lord Dattatreya established by Sadguru Shree Beedkar Maharaj, at Panchavati. Shri Damu Anna Deshpande, the caretaker of the temple made full enquiries about the young boy Vitthal (Shree Maharaj) and took care of him, by giving food etc. Shree Maharaj took bath in the river Ganges and visited different temples for two days. Shree Maharaj used to sit and meditate in the temple of Lord Shiva, (having the particular bell of Naroshankar).

His normal dress was a short cotton dhotee, a cotton shirt and cotton cap. Shree Maharaj used to wander along the riverside of Ganges, which was unfamiliar and where there was none known to him. While wandering like this, one day, he met an ascetic. He was seven feet in height wearing a loin cloth (Langoti) tiger skin on the body with matted hair and carrying a burning wooden piece on the shoulder. Shree Maharaj was simply astonished to see this lustrous and dreadful figure of the ascetic. The ascetic gasped both the hands of Shree Maharaj and enquired "young boy, from where have you come? What do you want?" without waiting for the reply the ascetic pulled Shree Maharaj towards him and forced some prasad (food offered to God) in his mouth and said "your wish will be fulfilled when time comes. Do not worry. My blessings are fully with you." So saying the ascetic went away. Shree Maharaj narrated this incident and said "It is very difficult to express every thing which took place at that time. One thing is true that I searched for the ascetic again but he had disappeared."

From Nashik, Shree Maharaj came to Dadar, Mumbai, where his maternal uncle Shri Narahar Narayan Sovani stayed. The uncle sent one letter to the father of Shree Maharaj. His father came from Ratnagiri and after persuasion, took him back to Ratnagiri.

The father expected him to become an eminent lawyer. The smartness, the intelligence, the mastery over the language and the right reasoning of Shree Maharaj would have brought fame and success to him in the lawyer's profession. But Shree Maharaj did not agree with the father and told him "Bhau (father), I am not born to become a lawyer. Lots of sins are involved in

the lawyer's profession. Hence I do not want to become a lawyer. I want to directly plead with God for the welfare of our family and my family is very very large".

If you study the biography of Shree Maharaj, one will know the exactness of above words of Shree Maharaj. He had considered the whole universe as his family and he had undergone limitless pain to uplift each and every life in this family of the universe. Without entangling himself and remaining a bachelor throughout, he sacrificed his life for the upliftment of these lives struggling in the mundane existence of this universe.

It is perfectly true that the great saints take births only for the welfare of the society.

### Search for Sadguru – second attempt

Shree Maharaj again decided to search for his Sadguru (preceptor). His mental uneasiness became unbearable and at the age of eighteen, he left his house and went away. Before leaving the house, he left a note addressed to his father as follows: -

"I am leaving the house and going away with some money. Because, I feel that our ancestors have accumulated a lot of sin in our family knowingly or unknowingly and I strongly feel to devote myself to the worship of God to emancipate my ancestors as well as ourselves from the accumulated sins in our family. Hence, I am going in search of a sadguru (preceptor) who will guide me in my mission for the upliftment and emancipation of the family by devotion and love towards God. Simultaneously I feel confident that I would be able to save myself from the cycle of birth and death. I want your blessings so that I may meet my sadguru. In case I do not return home, the share from the family property due to me may kindly be donated to Shree Ram Temple. On account of this serious lapse on my part, you will have to face a lot of problems and face a lot of censure from the public. Hence I beg you to forgive me. Also please do not try to search for me."

When this incident took place, Shree Maharaj's father was 58 years old. Shree Maharaj was fully aware that his father, in his old age, would have to face a lot of vilification from public on account of his sudden disappearance from the house.

Shree Maharaj came to Pune via Mumbai and went to the Muth (Temple-shrine) of sadguru Shree Beedkar Maharaj. This incident took place somewhere in the year 1929-1930. At that time, Shri Vasuanna Bhagwat, the disciple of Shree sadguru Beedkar Maharaj was looking after the Muth (Temple shrine) as a trustee. Shri Bhagwat had dedicated everything to Sadguru Shree Beedkar Maharaj and he was rendering full service to Shree Beedkar Maharaj by staying in the Muth along with his wife and children. Shri Bhagwat arranged for the stay of Shree Maharaj in the Muth and issued necessary instructions to all the fellow members "Nobody should interfere or make fun or trouble this boy." Shri Bhagwat treated Shree Digambardas Maharaj as his son and gave him the book "Shree Ram Hriday" for reading.

Shree Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe and Shri Bhagwat were both fellow disciples of Sadguru Shree Beedkar Maharaj and were friends. Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj was daily coming to the Muth at least twice, to pay obeisance to his Sadguru Shree Beedkar Maharaj.

Three days after the arrival of Shree Maharaj in the Muth, Shree Baba Maharaj came to the muth at about 12 a.m., called and spoke to Shree Maharaj “What Vithoba! You have run away from Ratnagiri and came here without informing your father?” Immediately pointing at Shree Maharaj, Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj addressed Shri Vasuanna Bhagwat, **“This boy sees me in the form of Shree AkkalkotNiwasi Swami Samarth”**

**By hearing these words, Shree Maharaj lifted his face and looked at Shree Baba Maharaj and Oh! Shree Maharaj saw the divine form of Shree AkkalkotNiwasi Swami Samarth standing on the Pata (wooden board) in front of him.** By seeing that divine form, Shree Maharaj lost his consciousness. He even forgot to pay obeisance to Shree Baba Maharaj. Shree Bhagwat woke up Shree Maharaj by both hands with affection and made him to prostrate at the feet of Shree Baba Maharaj. Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj in the form of Shree Swami Samarth moved his divine hands on the head and back of Shree Maharaj and said “As long as you are here, do always come to my house.”

After this wonderful divine experience, during his stay in the Muth, Shree Maharaj very often used to visit Dhumal Bldg., to pay obeisance to Shree Baba Maharaj and wait there to do whatever works Shree Baba Maharaj desired. Thus Shree Maharaj had entirely surrendered to Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj. Once all the fellow members of the Muth fell ill by fever and Shree Maharaj in that young age, looked after all the members in the Muth by personally cooking and feeding them till everybody recovered.

After a few days, Shree Maharaj fell ill seriously. Shree Baba Maharaj everyday used to come and see him to enquire about his health. During this illness, Shri. and Smt. Bhagwat took maximum care of Shree Maharaj and saved him from the jaws of death. Shree Maharaj always used to say, “During this illness, I got the practical experience of death and it turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Because of this illness, I used to get the blessings of Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj daily and got the maximum love and affection from the family of Shri. Bhagwat. Is this not a blessing in disguise?”

### Return to Ratnagiri

Shri Bhagwat informed about the illness of Shree Maharaj to his father at Ratnagiri. As per the advice of his father, his elder brother Shri Dattatreya(Sridhar) came to Pune and took Shree Maharaj to Ratnagiri. Shree Maharaj was ill for a number of days at Ratnagiri. After recovering from the illness, he stayed at Ratnagiri and continued his school education.

During this time, at Pomendi (Budruk) , his sister Smt. Godabai and at Someshwar, his maternal grandfather Shri. Narayan Daji Sovani expired. Within a few days after this, his father also expired at Pomendi (Budruk). After the expiry of his father, there was a quarrel in the family

and hence Shree Maharaj went to Someshwar and stayed with his maternal uncle. After six months he returned to his home at native place Pomendi and started looking after the family property alongwith his brother. Simultaneously he continued his daily routine like worshipping God, saying prayers after bath and meditation. Because of his sharp intelligence, excellent memory, minute and close observation. Continuous vigilant imaginative power and blessings from Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, he started kirtans, (Narration of religious topics punctuated by music) and speeches to educate the public as well as bring public together.

During school education itself, he developed patriotism as well as devotion to one's own Religion. While he was in Ratnagiri, he used to meet Swatantryaveer (the freedom fighter) Shri V.D. Sawarkar and Shree Maharaj was inspired to take part in the revolutionary agitation. In those days he used to wear Khaddar dress. Because he took active part in agitation, the police were after him. To escape from the police he had to walk long distances covering hundreds of miles by foot. During such a long walk by foot, he met Shree Gagangiri Maharaj at Gagangad hills near Kolhapur. Gagangad is a famous peak of the mountain Sahyadri. On that mountain near the peak, there are number of caves. On this famous Sahyadri Peak, important Saints of Nathpanth (sect) like Machhindranath, Gorakshnath and Gahininath were assembling to hold court. As per Shree Gagangiri Maharaj, during the time of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the coins of Maratha Kingdom were minted here. In such a historical place, the meeting of Shree Digambardas Maharaj and Shree Gagangiri Maharaj took place.

### **Journey To Mumbai - Employment And Public Awakening**

During 1937-38, Shree Maharaj again left his house at Ratnagiri and went to his maternal aunt's (mother's sister) house at Kalyan. Shri Madhavrao Jog was the husband of his maternal aunt. Under the guidance of Shri Ghare, he studied the vocation of a chemist. Whatever work he does he would do the utmost. With the help of Shri Ghare, he did his best in studying the vocation of the chemist. Daily he used to work for about eighteen hours. Everywhere he used to either walk or go by a bicycle. He used to collect the empty bottles from various places and then wash them cleanly with soap water. Then fill them with phenyl disinfectant to sell them and earn money.

During 1937-46, he worked as a medical representative in 'Indian Drug and Pharmaceuticals Company owned by a Bengali gentleman Dr. Bose.

By his industrious nature, Shree Maharaj earned a good name in the company. He fully knew the medicines, the merits and demerits of the medicines and also the usage of these medicines. This knowledge was not limited to the medicines manufactured in that company only. Because of his extremely sharp, studious, profound, plentiful industrious nature, the name of Shree Maharaj as a medical representative, became very popular. His intelligence, skill, cleverness, knowledge about medicines, patience regarding work, outspoken nature and punctuality made a strong impression on Dr. Bose. Dr. Bose twice called him to Kolkata. Dr. Bose

was sometimes discussing spiritual subjects with Shree Maharaj. Knowing the spiritual authority of Shree Maharaj, Dr. Bose desired that he should settle in Kolkata.

During this period, Shree Maharaj was staying with his maternal uncle Shri Narahari Narayan Sovni at Dadar; Mumbai. His daily timetable was fixed. Early morning at 4.30 AM he would get up, finish his bath and prayers and sit for Namasmara (repetition of God's name). In addition, meditation and reading of religious books would take about 3-4 hours everyday. After this he would go for work in time. He would return from work also in time. These timings were strictly followed. He would return home at about 7 to 7.30 PM daily and after washing his hands and feet he would attend to the children, in the house regarding their studies. The children, Datta Sovani, Bhau Biwalkar and Gangadhar Bhave got the valuable guidance from Shree Maharaj. In the evening again, after the prayers he would sit for meditation and reading religious books. Again before sleeping, he would sit on the bed and continue reading books. Even at midnight, it was observed sometimes that he would be in deep meditation. Even at that young age, his sleep was very much limited. In the spare time he would assist his aunt in her household work.

During his Dadar stay, Shree Maharaj had done a lot of work for the Institution, Brahman Seva Mandal. To give stability to this Mandal, he had started a number of programmes. In his young age, he had acted in some dramas of the Mandal and with his excellent dramatic gestures; he had pleased all the audience. For his lectures on religious topics, there would be a vast crowd to listen to him. By his fluent and unfaltering speech, he would make the audience spell bound. During this time, the public became fully aware of his authority on *Dnyaneshwari*.

Shree Maharaj's job was going on properly. The company was prospering. The public awakening work of Shree Maharaj was also in progress but after 1946, one day suddenly he resigned from his job and returned to Ratnagiri.

The divine play of saints cannot be comprehended.

### Solitude

After coming to Ratnagiri, Shree Maharaj started to stay in 'Krishnashram Lodging and Boarding' Owned by Shri Haribhau Kulkarni. During this time, he had no source of income. Even then. Due to the kindness of Sadguru, he was able to lead a good life without any encumbrance, by paying the boarding charges regularly.

During his stay in Ratnagiri, he was always found sitting silently on a tiger skin, as per the statement of Shri Sharad Kokaje, who was usually serving food to Shree Maharaj. Though externally he was seen sitting silently, in fact he would do meditation during that period. Due to the continuous meditation and God worship, lot of heat was developing in his body. With the increase in heat, there would be burning sensation in the body. When this burning sensation becomes unbearable, he would take cold-water bath to cool his body. Once the body gets cooled, he would start meditation again. Daily like this he would take bath 17-18 times and continue

meditation, during this time, he had cut down his travel and slowly he started remaining aloof from the external world.

Even during this condition of Shree Maharaj, his friends were to request him to solve their difficult problems. Any request to get rid of somebody's worries would anger Shree Maharaj. And after that there would be angry demonstrations like stamping and dashing with abuses to such an extent, that the needy person who comes to request him for help, gets totally frightened out of one's own wits. Only to evade the disturbance from public, Shree Maharaj was displaying such terrible anger externally. *People who came daily were able to understand the real meaning of this external anger of Shree Maharaj. The very fact that Shree Maharaj got angry, means, the work of the needy man was being attended.* Hence, people present there would encourage the needy person slowly afterwards, since the same was not possible in the presence of Shree Maharaj. *Even though compassion was abundantly overflowing from his heart, Shree Maharaj would show false anger externally. In fact, he would get a strong desire to get rid of the evils or sins and the ill fate of the persons who come to see him for help.* For the needy persons, he always gave *angara* (sacred ashes of incense burnt before a deity) and *prasad* (food offered to a deity) and say "please go away, don't show your face again."

The temple established by Shree Maharaj at that time still exists in the house of Shri Nana Dixit at Tilak Lane in Ratnagiri. The dress of Shree Maharaj at that time was a short dhotee, white shirt, black coat, black cap, chappals and an umbrella with a bamboo stick.

At that time, in Ratnagiri at Gokhale corner, there was a tailoring shop belonging to Shri Vinayak Keshav alias Dattopant Joshi. Shree Maharaj visited this shop always. There he would explain about divine truth as well as **metaphysics** to Shri Dattopant Joshi (Tailor), Shri Raghunath Keshav alias Raosaheb Joshi and Shri Bapusaheb Khandekar. He always would stand in the shop and smoke sometimes bidi and sometimes cigarette. Some times he would order for tea from the opposite hotel. This was the daily programme of Shree Maharaj. In that tailoring shop, a number of respectable citizens as well as Government officers of Ratnagiri were coming. Shree Maharaj would discuss with them the subject about divine truth and **metaphysics**. Alongwith Shri Dattopant Joshi, Shri Raghunath Keshav and Shri Bapusaheb Khandekar, Shree Maharaj would go to Khanu village near Pali, which was the native place of Shri Joshi brothers. In the Khanu Village, in an ancient temple "Gangeshwar" of Lord Shiva, Shree Maharaj would sit at midnight for meditation, alongwith these three companions. On one of these days, during his stay at Pali, Shree Maharaj blessed Shri Mukundrao Sawant in the **Divine Form of Shree Sai Baba**.

Now familiar people were to recognize Shree Maharaj as "Vitthalrao Joshi". By knowing the spiritual authority of Shree Maharaj, people would wait eagerly for his blessings. A lot of people were to put forth their private as well as family problems of day today business before him. Shree Maharaj always gave right advice to these people and stand behind them with full support. For a number of people who come with domestic problems, such as sickness, heavily indebtedness and losing of court cases, Shree Maharaj would solve their problems. Slowly, the fame of Shree Maharaj spread to a number of villages in Ratnagiri. The crowd of people started growing daily.

His companions of that time speak out from their recollections "It was a heavenly experience for us, for lodging and boarding alongwith Shree Maharaj. He would always mentally

read our thoughts. If any wrong thought comes in the mind of anyone of us, immediately Shree Maharaj would say, “What is going on in your mind?” Sometimes, he would wake up the companions at night and say “Today so and so has left his mortal body.”

At that time in Ratnagiri there was a saint by name Morebaba. Shree Maharaj always rendered service to him. One of these nights, Shree Maharaj suddenly told his companions “today, Shree Morebaba has left his mortal body.” Shree Maharaj’s sleep was far limited. He would discuss about spiritualism, divine truth and metaphysics with his companions for a long, during nighttime. Hence his companions were not able to sleep properly. Even then, because of the divine association with Shree Maharaj, no companion felt the troubles due to the shortage of sleep at any time.

### Meeting With Videhi<sup>1</sup> Shree Digambarbaba

During 1942, Shree Mhaarak met Shree Ramchandra Narsimha Wahalkar, alias Shree Digambarbaba at Sawarde in Chiplun Taluka. Shree Digambarbaba comes from Shree Akkalkot tradition (religious sect.) He was the disciple of Shree Gopalbua kelkar who was in turn the disciple of Shree Akkalkot Maharaj. He was a *videhi* saint. He used to rest on the surface of seawater for hours together and sometimes he also used to remain under water.

Shree Maharaj was blessed by the association of Shree Digambarbaba for about 5-7 years. Shree Digambarbaba had come to the house of Shree Maharaj at Ratnagiri once or twice. Shree Maharaj rendered full service to him. In the first meeting itself, Shree Digambarbaba had recognised Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj and told Shree Maharaj “Your Sadguru (preceptor) is very great. But I shall give you the love and affection of a mother”.

Thus Shree Digambarbaba showered all the love and affection on Shree Maharaj. There is a temple of Shree Swami Samarth i.e. Lord Dattatreya at Sawarde. Whenever Shree Maharaj came to Sawarde, he used to put up alongwith Shree Digambarbaba Maharaj in the kitchen room of the temple. Both used to sleep on the same coarse woollen blanket. **During one of these nights, Shree Swami Samarth Maharaj personally came and woke up Shree Maharaj. Shree Maharaj saw Shree Swami Samarth standing before him. His Divine lustre had spread everywhere. Shree Swami Samarth was smiling and he was holding a lustrous marble (a small round playing stone) and the marble was rotating very fast between his fingers. Shree Swami Samarth kept that marble in an open small box and that marble started rotating still faster and started emitting Divine lustre. After that, Shree Swami Samarth gave that box with the lustrous marble to Shree Maharaj.**

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<sup>1</sup> Videhi - Disembodied

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## Meeting with Shree Swaroopanand at Pawas

During the year 1949, Shree Maharaj met Shree Swami Swaroopanand at Pawas in Ratnagiri who was staying in the house of Shri Desai. The original name of Shree Swami Swaroopanand was Shree Ramchandra Vishnu Godbole.

Within next two months, **Shree Swami Swaroopanand as per the visionary instructions of his Guru (preceptor) Shree Ganeshnath Vaidya**, expressed his desire to handover the tradition of Nath Sampradaya (Nath religious sect.), alongwith all the power and authority to Shree Maharaj. But Shree Maharaj was not ready to take over this responsibility. Shree Swami Swaroopanand told Shree Maharaj that this was being done as per the instructions of his Guru (preceptor) Shree Ganeshnath Vaidya.

Shree Maharaj passed on this information to Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj for advice and orders. After listening to this information, Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj said, “We are not going to take any such responsibility”. But afterwards, Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj went in deep meditation for nearly one and half-hours. After retuning to consciousness from meditation, he said “Vithoba, you take the responsibility of Nath Sampradaya (Nath religious sect), which has come to us from the ancient times. It has to be done now.”

The inspiration, the energy and raising public awareness in the publication of Dnyaneshwari (commentary on Bhagvad Gita) in the form of poetic stanza written by Shree Swami Swaroopanand was planned entirely by Shree Maharaj. In this Dnyaneshwari, Shree Maharaj had written the introductory by name “Sumanjali” Shree Swami Swaroopanand always used to respect Shree Maharaj.

During that time, Shri Raghunath Keshav Joshi alias Shri Nana Joshi, Shri Vinayak Keshav Joshi alias Shri Dada Joshi and Shri Babu Khandekar were the close friends of Shree Maharaj. Shri R.K. Joshi was a Mamlatdar (Taluka Magistrate). V.K. Joshi and Shri Babu Khandekar were always requesting Shree Maharaj for getting them spiritually initiated (anugraha). But Shree Maharaj was interested in initiating Shri R.K. Joshi only. Shri R.K. Joshi used to tell him “Shree Maharaj, I don’t want the initiation from you. I will not be able to maintain the Gurushishya parampara (Preceptor-disciple relationship) at present. I would like to maintain this relationship of friendship and love between us.”

Once all the three friends alongwith Shree Maharaj had been to Pawas to get the blessings from Shree Swami Swaroopanand and after the meals again, when the question of initiation came up, Shree Swami Swaroopanand told Shri R.K. Joshi “Raghunath, Shree Maharaj desires to initiate you. This is a rare gain. This requires the merits of past life. Hence don’t miss this opportunity.”

Besides this, his two friends also convinced Shri R.K. Joshi and ultimately he agreed to take the initiation. Simultaneously Shree Maharaj also blessed Shri V.K. Joshi and Babu Khandekar with initiation alongwith Shri R.K. Joshi.

As per the orders of Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj, Shree Maharaj spread the **Nath Sampradaya** received from Shree Swami Swaroopanand, alongwith his own Swaroop

Sampradaya. After some time, during the year 1960, this spread of Nath Sampradaya, got stopped because of the following reason:-

Once Shree Swami Swaroopanand criticised on one of the works of Shree Maharaj. On that issue Shree Maharaj addressed Shree Swami Swaroopanand like this “How you are criticising about my working? You are a saint. You have got foresight. Without using foresight, how you have criticised me? I am not doing anything on my own without the permission of my sadguru. You have failed to understand me even after so many years.”

After this incident, Shree Maharaj discontinued the relationship with Shree Swami Swaroopanand and he never again went to Pawas. After this, he spoke to Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj “ I will not continue to spread the Nath Sampradaya. I will return the same to Shree Sadguru Ganeshnath Vaidya.” Then Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj spoke “You do not return the Nath Sampradaya. You surrender the same sect at my feet. After some time, we will again spread the same along with our Swaroop Sampradaya.”

### Meeting With Shree Narayan Maharaj Yargattikar

A few days after the year 1963, Shree Maharaj had been to the village Chimad along with Shri Jeevanrao Khsirasagar. At that time, in Chimad Muth, Shree Narayan Maharaj Yargattikar was occupying the seat. Shree Swami Swaroopanand also belonged to this Chimad Sampradaya (tradition). Shree Maharaj informed Shree Yargattikar Maharaj about the criticism passed by Shree Swami Swaroopanand. Shree Maharaj addressed Shree Yargattikar Maharaj, thus “I am a real disciple of my Sadguru (Guruputra). I never do anything without the orders of my Sadguru (preceptor). Under such circumstances, I do not understand why Shree Swami Swaroopanand has criticised about my working?”

To prove the prestige of the real preceptor – disciple relationship, he did one divine act. In Chimad there was a big and very deep well, full of water, with iron girders inside the well. At the bottom of the well, there was an idol of Lord Shiva. In spite of the objection by Shree Yargattikar Maharaj, by taking bale leaves (sacred leave of bale tree) and flowers in the hand Shree Maharaj jumped into the well. He went to the bottom of the well and worshipped Lord Shiva with flowers and bale leaves and came up without any problem.

By seeing this divine act of Shree Maharaj, Shree Yargattikar Maharaj exclaimed, “you are a real disciple (Guruputra) of a sadguru (preceptor). It is certainly true that you do not do anything without the orders of your Sadguru.”

Shree Amalanand Alias Shree Laxman Ramachandra Phadke

Shri Laxman Ramchandra Phadke alias the Saint Shree Amalanand belonged to village Pen in Raigad Dist. Maharashtra. The longing for attaining a sadguru (preceptor) made Shri Phadke to go to Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj at Pune, during the year 1949. Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj was staying in Dhumal Bldg., Pune at that time. Shri Godse and Shri Bharati Shastri also accompanied Shri Phadke. Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj reproved Shri Bharati Shastri in strong words regarding his hypocrisy. By seeing the terrific angry face of Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj, the devotees present there ran away. Next day, Shri Phadke and Shri Godse, evading Shri Bharati Shastri, went again to Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj for his blessings. Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj treated both of them with affection. From that day onwards, Shri Phadke used to go very often to Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj for his blessings. Once Shri Phadke sent Pedhas (sweetmeat) through Shri Vasant Godse, to Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj. Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj understood the pure devotion of Shri Phadke and accepted the Pedhas (sweetmeat). Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj told Shri Godse “After distributing pedhas, keep one pedha in the dish for Laxmanrao Phadke.”

All this took place in Dhumal Building in Pune. Simultaneously, in Mumbai, Shri Laxmanrao Phadke got a strong urge to go to Shree Akkalkot Swami Muth at Dadar in Mumbai and hence he went to the Muth. The priest of the Muth, Shri Mama, gave one pedha to Shri Laxmanrao, and said “I do not understand as to why I got this urgent inspiration to give this pedha to you.”

**As desired by Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj the pedha kept in the plate at Pune, for Shri Laxmanrao Phadke, was given to him at Dadar, Mumbai in Shree Akkolkot Swami Muth.**

This was beyond one’s imagination but it had taken place. Shri Laxmanrao Phadke saw this as a miracle and felt very much blessed by Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj. Shri Laxmanrao had desired for spiritual initiation (Anugraha) from Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj but it did not materialise. Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj gave him blessings, stating that he would soon meet his Sadguru. After this Shri Laxmanrao had gone to Ganagapur alongwith Shri Ambiye Joshi and Pralhad Joshi. There they got the blessings from **Shree Vishweshwaraiya Maharaj** alias Shree Amma. Shree Amma, recognised Shri Laxmanrao and said “you will meet your Guru in Mumbai. Shree Vitthalrao Joshi (Shree Maharaj) will bless you with spiritual initiation (Anugraha)”. In Mumbai, Shri Dhavale was running a Publication House in Samarth Sadan. Shri Laxmanrao Phadke used to go there regularly looking for good religious books regarding his research work. One of these days when he was sitting in editor’s section, Shree Maharaj came himself to Shri Laxmanrao, by telling his name and place and also stated the reason for his coming there.

Shree Maharaj spoke “I have come here to bless you with initiation in Nath Sampradaya (Nath sect). So saying Shree Maharaj placed the photo taken together with Shree Vishweshwaraiya Swami alias Amma, Shri Laxmanrao, Shri Ambiye and Shri Pralhad Joshi, on the head of Shri Laxmanrao. By the mere touch of Shree Maharaj, Shri Laxmanrao lost his consciousness. For three hours he was in a trance and continuously enjoying the bliss. Shree Maharaj brought him back to consciousness. After this incident, he used to go to Shree Maharaj very often. Shree Maharaj used to clear his doubts about divine truth and metaphysics. After some

time when Shri Laxmanrao went to Pawas to take the blessings from Shree Swami Swaropanand he was convinced by Shree Swami Swaropanand, that he had been rightly initiated by Shree Maharaj and then Shree Laxmanrao Phadke came to be known as Shree Swami Amalanand.

### Ate Kanheri Flowers As Prasad<sup>2</sup>

Shree Maharaj had been to Dhumal Building, at Shanawar Peth Pune, for taking blessings from Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. At that time, Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj gave him Kanheri Flowers as Prasad and Shree Maharaj immediately ate them as Prasad without realising that these flowers were poisonous. Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj spoke "Vithoba, what have you done? The Kanheri flowers are poisonous. These flowers were given to you not for eating. Now let it be. You bring the jars containing ghee and awala fruit (Indian gooseberry)" Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj gave enough of Ghee and awala to Shree Maharaj for eating and Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj personally also ate the same.

Shree Maharaj was in the habit of fasting on every Ekadashi day (The eleventh day of a fortnight). This habit he continued for every month and every year for number of years. It so happened that on a particular Ekadashi day, Shree Maharaj had been to Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj for his blessings. On that fasting day of Ekadashi, Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj gave him masala rice prepared with onion and ghee heated with asafoetida (Hing), mustered seed etc. for eating. Normally on Ekadashi day of fasting, nobody eats the whole day and that too the onion is totally prohibited. This masala rice was so much that it was enough for four persons. Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj sat there with closed eyes. As it was not possible for Shree Maharaj to eat so much rice that too on a fasting day, he tried to call silently some devotees present there to share some quantity of rice. But Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj used to open his eyes and knowingly drive away the devotees who wanted to share rice. So without anybody's help, Shree Maharaj had to eat the entire quantity of rice prepared with onion silently and slowly. Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj had kept the masala rice prepared with onion specially on an Ekadashi fasting day for Shree Maharaj, only for testing his obedience to his Guru (preceptor). Shree Maharaj was successful in fulfillment of his Ekadashi day observance since he had obeyed his Guru's order.

### Blessings from Sadguru<sup>3</sup>

Shree Maharaj had deep attachment towards his Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. For him, Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj was everything in all the ways. He desired that he should render

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<sup>2</sup> Prasad - Food offered to deity

<sup>3</sup> Sadguru - Preceptor

maximum service to his Sadguru and leave this mundane world prior to his Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. Hence he used to come to Pune very often to take the blessings from Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj.

As per the first plan, Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj was to lay down his mortal body on 31st July 1953 and he had personally told Shree Maharaj about this, three years back. On 4th July 1953, Shree Maharaj came to Pune. After realising that his Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj was going to lay down his mortal body on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1953, Shree Maharaj was extremely pained. For nearly seven days, Shree Maharaj and Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj were having a debate with due love, for cancellation of the plan of laying down the mortal body by Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. After realising that Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj is not ready to cancel his plan, Shree Maharaj alongwith some fellow disciples started fasting in the Muth of Sadguru Shree Beedkar Maharaj. Shree Maharaj decided to lay down his mortal body earlier to that of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj and he obtained the necessary permission from Sadguru Shree Beedkar Maharaj. Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj was, all in all, to Shree Maharaj and the very thought of the separation from his Sadguru, forced Shree Maharaj to lay down his mortal body.

Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj realised that his disciple Shree Maharaj had been affected seriously and hence decided to postpone his plan of laying down his mortal body. He said, "You want me to wait, it is alright. Then tell me as to how long I will have to wait?" He asked Shree Maharaj. By this kind understanding of Sadguru, Shree Maharaj felt an uncommon happiness and suddenly said, "Kindly postpone for one year" After stating these words, Shree Maharaj suddenly felt restless as to why he had asked for one year only.

Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj said "Be it so! As per your wish I will wait for one year. But now you will have to continue in this world for carrying out my works on my behalf" Yes I shall stay" Shree Maharaj agreed without any other alternative. This way, Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj by his love, bound Shree Maharaj with the promise for the welfare of public as well as this world

**The day 24th July 1953 was the happiest day for Shree Maharaj.** Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj told him to take out the golden ring with serpent head and also the silver ring worn by Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj on his index finger. Shree Maharaj begged earnestly to Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj "Even as per your orders, if I remove the rings from your fingers, it will be a theft. You are omniscient (all knowing). You are gracious enough. By knowing the devotion of this boy, you yourself can kindly put the rings on my finger."

Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj understood the good intentions of Shree Maharaj and put the serpent headed golden ring and silver ring personally on the finger of right hand of Shree Maharaj and said-

**"I have put back the rings of the Guru (preceptor) on the finger of my Guru only."** (The rings of his Guru Shree Beedkar Maharaj were returned to Shree Beedkar Maharaj reborn as Shree Maharaj). From that moment onwards, Shree Maharaj attained the consciousness of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj internally and externally. Same year, as per the orders of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, Shree Maharaj brought new wooden sandals (Khadava) for Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj on a Guru Pournima day (full moon day of Ashadha or July month). Sadguru

Shree Baba Maharaj wore those sandals for about 15-20 minutes and kept them separately and got them worshipped by Shree Maharaj in a Shoadshopachar method (sixteen ways of doing homage to a deity or Guru). At that time, Shree Maharaj lost his awareness and in a semi-conscious state, he completed the worship of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj blessed him, took out the rose flower garland from his neck and put the same around the neck of Shree Maharaj. In addition, Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj also gave his personal rosary (of beads), the photo of himself along with his wife (Ayisaheb) and his wooden sandals to Shree Maharaj. He also embraced affectionately Shree Maharaj and said: -

**“Vithoba, from today onwards I have accepted all your egoism on my own will. Today onwards, you need not do any work on your own. Remember that henceforth I would be doing all your deeds. You might go anywhere or to any corner of this world, even to America or England, everywhere I will be present with you. Henceforth you should look only after the temple shrine. If you come across any fertile land, in rare cases only, you should sow the seeds in my name. This really meant ‘only if you come across a suitable and capable person, you should initiate him in the Swaroop Sampradaya.’**

**As above, Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj blessed Shree Maharaj completely. This was the greatest moment in the life of Shree Maharaj. After this, Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj advised Shree Maharaj to remain in Ratnagiri till further orders.**

### **Mahasamadhi Of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj**

As per the orders of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, Shree Maharaj went to Ratnagiri and stayed there. After this, on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> August 1954 (Shravan vadya 4 shake 1876) exactly 28 minutes past midnight, Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj took his mahasamadhi (last conscious communion with God). Even at that time, he did not permit Shree Maharaj to come to Pune.

**“ I have given everything to you. Now only my bones are remaining here. Hence you don’t come here” these were the words spoken to Shree Maharaj by Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. After taking Mahasamadhi, Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj used to give his Divine Vision everyday for thirteen days to Shree Maharaj at Ratnagiri, fully assuring him. This was what Shree Maharaj used to tell about his understanding.**

### **Establishment Of The Samadhi Shrine**

All the devotees desired that the last rites of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj should take place in the plot owned by Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj only. Hence special permission was obtained from the District Collector of Pune, Shri Chinmulgund ICS and **the last rites of**

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**Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj was carried out on 19<sup>th</sup> August 1954 in the personal plot, 937/D Chatusringi Road, Shivajinagar, Pune – 16.**

This plot, mentioned above was offered, as a gift through valid papers, to Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj by one of his devotees Shri K.R. Wagh.

After celebrating the death anniversary of Shree Swami Samarth during the month of April 1955, Shree Maharaj and Shri Pandurangrao Marballi had been to Goa for some work. In those days, there was only one route to go from India (Bharat) to Goa, which was via Majali, near Karwar for which necessary permit from Portuguese Government was required. After staying in Goa for some time, they wanted to come to Pune to celebrate the first death anniversary of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. As the time was short, it was not possible for them to come via Majali. Since, from Castle Rock via Londa was a short route, both walked a distance of 10-15 miles and came upto a place known as Dudhasagar, near Castle Rock. But Indian Authorities did not allow them to cross the border at Castle Rock. Hence both came to a place called Mashel and went to the house of a devotee Shri Anna Kamat and celebrated the first death anniversary of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj.

After Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj's Mahasamadhi, Shree Maharaj came to Pune after eight months. He met some devotees of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. After taking the required permission from the daughter of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, Smt. Nirmalatai Neelkant Khare, Shree Maharaj erected a tin shed Muth (temple-shrine) of the size 12' x 15' with a photograph of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj on the plot 937/D (Survey No. 312/D) at the location, where the last rites of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj took place. Afterwards on 18<sup>th</sup> August 1956, Shree Maharaj took the plot 937/D on rental basis for a period of 30 years (duly registered) with a yearly rent of Rs.300/- from Smt. Nirmalatai Khare. After this, Shree Maharaj started looking after the Muth (temple-shrine) of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj regularly.

It is true, that the full blessings of a Sadguru (preceptor), are essential for a disciple, to accept the lifelong responsibility of looking after and maintaining the Muth (temple-shrine). But it is also true that a firm mental resolve is essential for a disciple to dedicate entire life, in the service of his Sadguru (preceptor). The determined purpose, the positive nature free from doubts, the unflinching faith in the Sadguru, a firm conviction that the Sadguru is the sole performer of everything and the sole devotion of a disciple, can only accomplish the accepted works.

Shree Maharaj had set an example to the devotees by his very lofty ideals and boundless devotion to his Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj.

### **Installation Of Oil Painting Of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj**

The devotees used to break the coconuts In front of the photo of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj and used to sprinkle the coconut water on the photo to pay their respect to Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. Due to this, the photograph had got spoiled. Hence, Shree Maharaj thought of installing a new oil painting of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj on the occasion of the second

death anniversary. In view of this Shree Maharaj assigned this work to a Mumbai based portrait-maker Shri Sawardekar. Shri Sawardekar started the work of preparing the portrait. Actually he had never seen Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. Hence Shri Sawardekar was unable to paint the eyes of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, so he consulted Shree Maharaj who advised him –“ Once you go to Pune Muth (temple-Shrine) and take the blessings from Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, then you would be able to complete the painting.

Accordingly Shri Sawardekar went to Pune Muth for the blessings of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj and while returning to Mumbai, in the train itself, Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj gave him a Divine Vision and said”You paint my eyes like this.” After coming to Mumbai, Shri Sawardekar completed the oil painting.

At that time, Shree Maharaj was staying with Shri Marballi at Talmakiwadi, Nana Chowk, Mumbai. Shree Maharaj was to go to Pune with that Oil Painting for the second death anniversary of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. But two days before going to Pune, something happened and Shree Maharaj cancelled the programme to go to Pune. He wanted to send the oil painting to Pune with Shri Marballi, but the previous day, Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj came in the dream of Shree Maharaj, in the early morning and spoke- “why are you not coming to Pune? You will have to come to Pune.”

After getting this vision of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, in the dream, Shree Maharaj and Shri Marballi went to Pune along with the oil painting and celebrated the second death anniversary of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj by installing the oil painting in the Muth (temple-shrine).

### Installation Of Asthikalash And Padukas Of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj

On 19<sup>th</sup> August, 1954, the last rites of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj were carried out at Pune. At that time Shri Pandurangrao Marballi got a Divine vision of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj in the dream who ordered him, that while collecting ‘asthi’ ( bones), he should keep two ‘asthi’ separately and give them to shree Maharaj. As per the orders, Shri Marballi kept two ‘asthi’ of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj separately and took them to Mumbai. In 1965, Shri Marballi gave these ‘ asthi’ to Shree Maharaj. Shree Maharaj carried out the sacred rites of the ‘asthi’ as per the procedure of the ‘Shastras’ (scriptures) and he got prepared a silver pitcher (kalash). He placed the two ‘asthi’ in a silver box and kept the box in the silver pitcher. On the top of the pitcher, he installed small silver padukas (silver model of the feet) These padukas are being worshiped daily as per the Shodshopachar method (sixteen ways of doing homage to a deity or a Guru) alongwith ceremonial ablution (abhishek) and Ekadashani. This is a char - samadhi (samadhi of padukas) of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. In the beginning it was installed in the house of Shri S.N.Joshi. The daily worshipping ritual was carried out by Vedmurthy (learned priest) Dadu Namjoshi.

On 13<sup>th</sup> January 1966, Shree Maharaj brought this Asthikalash (silver pitcher containing bones) of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj to the house of Dr. Shrinivas Dattatray Joshi at Hindu colony Dadar, Mumbai, from the house of Shri S.N. Joshi. At that time, Shree Maharaj was accompanied by Dr. Joshi, Vedmurthy Dadu Namjoshi, Shri D.N.Banavali and Shri Vasant Vasudev Pandit.

Afterwards, in January 1969, Shree Maharaj brought this Asthikalash to the house of Shri Vasant Vasudev Pandit at Byculla, Mumbai. Till today this Asthikalash is in the house of Shri Vasant Vasudev Pandit only. In this house, last Sunday of every month, the devotees of Shree Maharaj from Mumbai, assemble here and carry out the reading of religious books like Shree-mad-Bhagwat, life history of Sadgurus and saints and also carry out the Namasmara (the continuous repetition of the name of God or Sadguru).

On 21<sup>st</sup> May 1989, when Shree Maharaj took Mahasamadhi (last conscious communion with God), his 'asthi' (bones) were purified by sacred rites as per the procedure of the Shastras (scriptures) and then placed in three silver pitchers (kalash). Out of these, one Asthikalash (silver pitcher containing the bones of Shree Maharaj) was installed as per the rituals of the Shastras (scriptures) on 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1991 in the house of Shree Kamalakar Walawalkar (at Suyash Bldg., Gokhale Road, Dadar, Mumbai). Now in this house also on the last Sunday of every month the devotees of Shree Maharaj assemble here and carry out the reading of religious books, life history of Sadgurus, saints and also carry out the Namasmara as done in the house of Shri Pandit at Byculla Mumbai.

### Gradual Development And Expansion Of The Temple-Shrine

Since the responsibility of the Temple-Shrine of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj was accepted willingly, Shree Maharaj tried his best till the last moment of his life for its development and expansion.

Shree Maharaj said "My independent existence as Vitthal Joshi has ended on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1953. Now I am seen here purely by the kind grace of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. There is no existence of my own. Only Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj is the doer as well as the cause to be performed."

Further Shree Maharaj was saying, "It is entirely due to the religious merit of my mother and father that I could render service at the feet of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj as an humble servant. I am only an attendant of this temple-shrine. My Sadguru (reverend preceptor) only brought me in this world for his work and as such my existence will remain as long as my Sadguru desires. My supreme aim in my life is to render service to my Sadguru as well as to complete all the works assigned to me by my Sadguru. I treat it as my sacred duty to act as per the wish and obey commands of my Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. I shall live in this world only for Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. I shall speak only that which he desires me to speak. I shall do only that which he desires me to do. What Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj suggests, only that shall

be my good thoughts. Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj only shall be the Supreme in my life. There shall be no other God than Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj in my life.

With this awakening thought in his heart, Shree Maharaj surrendered himself completely and became one with Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. The one and only aim in the life of Shree Maharaj was to spread the banner of glory and greatness of the temple-shrine of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj sky-high alongwith the augmentation of the size of devotees of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. Shree Maharaj spoke "*Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj is in fact Shree Swami Samarth himself. That means, he is the incarnation of Lord Dattatreya. The existance of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj would be for one thousand years in the temple-shrine of Pune and this will become an important holy place, attracting thousands of devotees. This temple-shrine of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj would be a second 'Ganagapur' (Ganagapur is the famous holy place of Lord Dattatreya. It is located in Karnataka State.)*

After taking the plot where the temple-shrine is located, on lease basis, Shree Maharaj started repairing the plot including the levelling, after stuffing with rubbles, earth and building a border wall etc. He also thought of building in the temple-shrine plot for his stay as well as for the stay of the devotees who come from outside Pune. At that time in the plot 937-D, there was a small temple-shrine of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj and for the use of devotees, there was a small shed of the size 12' X15' in the eastern corner of the plot. Because of this small shed, it was not possible to accommodate all the devotees who use to come to the temple-shrine from outside Pune, to attend the only festival of the death anniversary day (Punyatithi) of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj and due to this shortage of space, the devotees from outside Pune had to make their own arrangements outside the temple-shrine in different locations for their stay.

To solve this accommodation problem, the devotees decided to collect donations and present the collected amount to Shree Maharaj who would take up the construction of a building as per his plan and wish.

As decided, during November 1959, the devotees and followers of Shree Maharaj, honoured him and presented a cloth bag containing Rs.59, 999/-. In fact Shree Maharaj had already started the construction work of the building from 1958 itself and the ground floor was completed by 1959. The donation collected was not enough to meet the budget for the construction of the building. On 26<sup>th</sup> June 1959(6<sup>th</sup> day of Jyeshtha month, 3<sup>rd</sup> month of the year 1881 as per Hindu Calendar) the Vastushanti (opening ceremony) was performed with religious rites as per the Hindu system. At that time, only the ground floor of the building was constructed.

On the night of the opening ceremony (Vastushanti) Shree Pandurangrao Marballi had a dream and he got the vision of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, who suggested to Shree Maharaj to construct one more floor with terrace in the building. When Shree Maharaj came to know of this dream, he said "There is no problem, since it was suggested by Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, the work would surely get completed by the grace of Sadguru only". After this the first floor of the building was also completed and the two floors were ready for accommodating the devotees. Then in the Shravan month (fifth month as the Hindu calendar, August month as per English calander) the death anniversary of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj was due. On the anniversary day, after the night Aarati (waving of a lamp, singing a devotional song in front of a deity) was over, Shree Maharaj announced "In future, we will celebrate the death anniversary on a small

scale and celebrate the birth anniversary of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj on a grand scale". This way after 1959 onwards, the birth anniversary of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj was being celebrated on a grand scale.

Shree Maharaj could get the residential building with ground floor as well as the first floor including the terrace, constructed by taking loan on a personal responsibility on Plot No. 937-D. The donation collected by devotees was very little compared to the total budget required. Promissory notes for loan amount were issued in the names of devotees Shri Ramesh Balsekar, Shri Mugwe and Shri Wani. The repayment of this loan was personally arranged by Shree Maharaj. A part of the compound wall was got constructed along with construction of the building.

Since this plot-937-D was taken on lease by Shree Maharaj from the owner, Smt. Nirmalatai Neelkanth Khare, (daughter of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj) two name boards giving these details were installed, one at the main gate and the other in the temple-shrine. These two name boards are still in existence since 1959, one showing Smt. Nirmalatai Neelkanth Khare as the owner of the plot and the other showing Shree Maharaj, as leaseholder only.

During that period, the devotees of Shree Maharaj from Pune, included, Shri Bhat, Shri Taty Joshi, Shri Kale, Shri Kulkarni, Mama Paradkar, Shri Amondikar, Shri Bhagwat, Shri Panwalkar, Shri Dalvi, Dr. Kalyanpurkar, Shri Jeevanrao Kshirsagar, Shri Shivaji Maharaj-disciple of Shankar Maharaj and VedMurthy Shri Sapre (who concluded the opening ceremony-Vastu-Shanti of the new residential building). The fellow disciples of Shree Maharaj included Shri N.R. Phadke, Shri Shripad Gokhale, Shri Joglekar and Shri Ambekar. Further the devotees from Mumbai included Shri Vishwanath Prabhudesai, Shri Wani, Shre Mugwe, Shri Ramesh Balsekar, Shri Marballi Shri Nagarkatti, Shri Murali Balse, Shri Dinanath Banavali, Shri Dhondopant Sapre and Shri T.S.Tendolkar. After the year 1958 onwards, devotees like Shri Kamalakar Walawalkar, Shri Vasudev Pandit, Shri Rambhau Athalye, Shri Ramakant Kulkarni, Police Inspector Shri Barve and also a large number of devotees even from Konkan Area started coming to the temple shrine. Shree Maharaj started raising the temple-shrine. But there would be always an impediment in the way of doing good deeds. By making Shree Maharaj a first respondent and Smt. Nirmalatai Khare as second respondent, one of the devotees only, of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, Shri S.R. Ambekar, made an application to the Deputy Charity Commissioner of Pune, stating that the income from the plot no. 937-D should be declared as public property. Nearly for three to three and half years the hearing of the application continued. Ultimately the Deputy Charity Commissioner passed the judgement stating that plot no.937-D along with the temple-shrine of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, as well as, the residential building is entirely a private property. Smt. Nirmalatai Neelkanth Khare, the daughter of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, being the only heir, becomes the single owner for the entire income from the plot no.937-D and Shree Maharaj become the leaseholder of the property.

In the year 1958, Shree Maharaj purchased the plot No.312-c which was adjacent to plot No. 937-D, from Shri K.R. Wagh and out of this plot, he gave a piece of land measuring (30'X91') as a gift, on a registered paper to Smt. Nirmalatai Khare, for raising the temple-shrine of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. Again in the year 1959 Shree Maharaj purchased a piece of land measuring (130'X15') located near the eastern side of the temple shrine, from Fergusson

Collage, D.E.Society and gifted the same on registered paper, to Smt. Nirmalatai Khare for the purpose of the temple -shrine. Further in the year 1958 itself, Shri K.R. Wagh had made an oral agreement for the sale of plot no.312-B to Shree Maharaj at a price of Rs. 11,000/- and a wire compound was erected round this plot no. 312-B. This plot Shree Maharaj actually purchased in the year 1978 and allotted the same to Shri Vitthalrao Joshi Charities Trust. By the year 1959, Shree Maharaj got all the plots properly filled up with good earth (Mati –clay) and then got levelled.

### Devotion Towards His Preceptor

Shree Maharaj personally used to look after the hospitality of all the devotees who used to come to the temple-shrine, to pay obeisance to Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. During the festival, Shree Maharaj used to supervise the works such as, cooking of meals, serving food to devotees, winding up and cleaning the place afterwards and also maintaining the cleanliness of the compound as well as the sanctity of the temple-shrine etc. and if necessity arises, he used to carry out all the above jobs personally. A number of devotees are still available who have actually witnessed the all round development, prosperity and expansion of the temple-shrine alongwith its associated surroundings, during thirty to thirty two years right from the date 18<sup>th</sup> August 1956 onwards.

First of all the temple-shrine was erected. Then the stone compound enclosing the plot no. 937-D was constructed. Then above the main gate an arch inscribed with name of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj was erected. Thereafter a residential building was constructed for accommodating devotees coming from outside Pune. Then a flag hoisting pillar and fountains were constructed. Then a kitchen with adequate capacity was made ready. The place for serving food to the devotees was specially treated with cowdung as per Hindu customs. After the possession of plots 937-D and 937-C, vegetables, flower plants, fruit trees are grown on these plots. So that fresh vegetables, flowers and fruits are readily available for worship as well as for offering food to deities. Arrangement was also made for washing hands and feet for the devotees, who come to the temple-shrine, by constructing eight water tanks.

Trees and plants of coconut, betal nut, jackfruit, Neerphanas (used for vegetable), pineapples, cashew nut, jambul fruit, lemon, citrus fruit, grapes, guava fruit, pomegranate fruit, chickoo fruit Bananas, mango, mulberry, ramphal (like a large red custard apple-sitaphal) custard apple, papaya, spices like cinnamon and creeping plants like passion fruit (edible fruit of some species of passion flower), black pepper etc are being maintained very carefully.

Due to this careful maintenance, the trees, plants and creeping plants started blossoming with fruits in abundance and as a result of which the trees and plants started bending down due to the excess weight. This made the provision of fresh fruits for the daily worship as well as for the offering of food to the deities in the temple-shrine. The creeping plants of watermelon as well as that of chibud fruit resembling muskmelon also started giving abundant crop. The bhokara trees also started blossoming. Trees like devdaru (a species of pine tree), subabhoor, Australian

goldmohor, shireesh (a delicate fragrant flower), Ashoka (a small evergreen tree with scarlet and orange flowers), cypress (coniferous tree with dark foliage), apata (*Bouhinia Tomentosa*), chita, may flower etc. alongwith creeping plant like brahmi used to keep the surroundings very cool always.

Shree Maharaj was gave great care and attention to the maintenance of flowers at Pune and Dervan temple-shrines. It consists of small open sheds with climbing plants or creeping plants of a variety of flowers like jasmine, juei, mogra, butmogra etc. It also consists of shrubs of jaswandi flowers of different colours, white colour ananta flowers, fully blossomed parijat flowers blue, purple and white colour, very delicate kanchana flowers, agastya, shevanti, sadafuli flowers and also sayampushpi, nishigandha, kardali, tagar, gonda, zendu (merigold) terda, bhuichafa, lily, sonchafa, Kavathichafa, Banglorechafa, kailaschafa, different types of rose flowers, auster, sunflowers, holy hawk, bhendigulab, jerbera, vherbina, jeranium and also purple blue red and yellow colour ghaneri gandhari flowers. The garland of bakul flowers give joy by its mild fragrance. The brahma kamal (lotus) flower is being used for worship of God during monsoon (sharavan). Even mandar flowers are being used in preparing garlands. Mandar, audumber, shami, bel tulsi (holy basil) vada (banyan tree) pimple (fig), and palas curry leaves, payar and sacred grass etc. used in the daily worship available in plenty. The shatavari is being planted in the earthen pots. Different types of gladiola flowers are being used to bring elegance to the surroundings of the Temple-shrine. On the whole, different varieties of fragrant and beautiful flowers required for the daily worship are being readily made available in abundance. Even the flowers like rose, champak and sontakka are made available in basketful (round basket made of split bamboo sticks) on daily basis. A minimum of one basket full of flowers is being distributed daily to the devotees who come to the temple-shrine.

Vegetables like palak, Muth (pot herb), rajgira (grass and its seed), salad (raw green vegetable) chuka, chakwat, ambadi, coriander (green vegetables) are being grown all the twelve months of the year. Vegetables like beans, double beans, long seed pods (shenga), drum stick flowers etc. are being grown in plenty and the excess vegetables after the usage in the temple-shrine are being distributed to the devotees for taking home.

The creeping plants on small opensheds, growing vegetable fruits like snake gourds, shirali, ghosali, bottle-gourds, tondli, bitter gourds used to bend down due to the weight of the excess growth of vegetable fruits. Vegetables like small and big brinjals, pumpkins, lady's fingers, cabbage, navalkol, cauliflower, chillies, gavar are being grown in a big measure. The sugar cane is being grown in a small but sufficient quantity to serve the juice to the devotees in the festivals. After the usage for serving juice to the devotees, the excess of sugarcane is also being distributed to the devotees just like fruits, vegetables and flowers.

In the temple-shrine, the plants of bael fruits, holi basil and sacred grass have been tended with great care and attention, as these are essential in the daily worship. Everyday morning the panchgavya (the mixture of five things derived from the cow viz. Milk, curd, clarified butter, urine and dung) is being prepared. For this purpose, cows are being reared up in the temple-shrine. The maize is being grown in the temple-shrine for use as a food for parrots, grey parrots and cows. Plants and creeping plants of clove, cinamon, Cardamom, Nutmeg, black pepper, five-in-one turmeric, ambe-halad, ginger, aloo, kanagar, panphuti, lajari (sensitive plant),

aghada, laxmana, bamboo etc. have been maintained with great care and attention in the temple-shrine. In Shree kshetra Dervan, when the cows and bullocks of the temple-shrine go for grazing in the morning, one can observe that these animals are all very sturdy, healthy and strong. In the temple-shrine of Dervan, even parrots and peacocks have been brought up.

The devotees who come to the temple-shrine at Pune, after paying obeisance to Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, they take the blessings of Shree Maharaj. Then take prasadam (food offered to the deity) and go home. Shree Maharaj used to personally talk to every devotee about his or her families. He used to give the devotees, the flowers, fruits and whatever else possible. He also used to give groundnuts (peanuts) as prasadam and for outside devotees he used to give *angara* (sacred ashes of incense burnt before a deity) and *sunhawada* (jinger-candy). Shree Maharaj personally used to talk the group of Brahmins who daily come to the temple-shrine for performing rituals as well as other devotees individually and each devotee in turn used to discuss even one's private family problems with open mind and full confidence with Shree Maharaj.

When Shree Maharaj was with children, he would behave like a child. Even he would make them sit on his shoulder or his lap and allow them to play. Not only that, he would clap and make them laugh with mimickings and he was to say, "These children are in fact, God only. They are like a monarch. They are like a king. They are pure, clean and free from all attachments. Is there any person in this world who has that courage to behave like these children?"

Some of these children were addressing Shree Maharaj by different names like "Aajoba, Baba, or Dane Aajoba" etc. Accordingly Shree Maharaj would talk to each child separately, remembering the name by which he (Shree Maharaj) was being addressed by that child.

Shree Maharaj always remembered the individual choice such as taking tea, coffee, milk or syrup of the devotees, even when the devotees come to the temple-shrine after one month or even after five years. Breakfast time was to be at 9.00 A.M. Before the breakfast there was Aarati (waving of a lamp before a deity by singing a religious song) in the temple-shrine. Then in the evening also at 6.00 P.M. there would be Aarati. Till the Aarati is over the main gate would remain closed, both times. This custom is still being followed. The important thing is that each and every devotee, who comes to the temple-shrine is being treated with great affection, hospitality and also sincere enquiry is being made about one's family. While giving permission to depart with an affectionate good-bye to each devotee, Shree Maharaj was to say, " You are coming every Monday. Now we will meet again on next Monday. Please come regularly to the temple-shrine. Your regular visit to the temple-shrine develops a smooth relationship and increases affection, nearness and also devotion towards God. It also increases purity of the mind."

Shree Maharaj started the daily religious ceremonials (rituals) in the temple-shrine. Everyday morning before 5.30 A.M., the bedding of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj in the temple-shrine is taken out by wearing a silk dhoti. After this, the entire temple-shrine is cleaned by removing all the refuse and at 6.A.M., the Namsmaran (repetition of the name of God or sadguru) of the sacred hymn '**Shree Swami Samarth jaya jaya Swami Samarth**', is carried out for fifteen minutes. After this, the Shodshopachar (sixteen ways of paying homage to a deity or sadguru) of the silver padukas (silver models of the feet) of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj is

taken up. Various daily rituals like 'Laghurudra', recitation of "Atharvasheersha", repetition of "Shreesookta and oblation into the fire, the reading of "Saptashati" "Shree Guruleelamrut" , "Shree Guru Charitra". Shree MadBhagwat" repetition of the sacred hymn"Gayatri Mantra" and' Chaturdash Pranavi',the reading of "Dashgranth" and also hospitality of Vedic brahmins and preparing 'Dashgranthi brahmins' by giving Scholarships etc.,is being carried out under the personal supervision of Shree Maharaj.

Shree Maharaj started celebrating all the important festivals pertaining to the temple-shrine of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj and the same custom is being continued till today. The festivals like birth anniversaries as well as death anniversaries of important saints, sadgurus, and incarnation of deities are being celebrated in the temple-shrine. The festival starts after the completion of 'Panchsookta Pawaman, Laghurudra and the food offering to the deities. Normally the festivals start after 'Gudipadwa' festival (New year festival celebrated on the first day of the month Chaitra as per Hindu Calender and during March or April as per English Calender). After this, festivals like 'Ramnavmi' (The birthday of Lord Rama) 'Shree Hunuman Jayanti' (The birthday of Lord Hanuman) and other important festivals are being celebrated.

In the month of 'Maagh' (January or February month) the birth of' Lord Shree Ganesh'and in the month of Bhadrapad (i.e. August or Septembar month)' Lord Shree Ganesh festival ' for one and half day are being celebrated every year. In the same way,in the month of Aashwin(October or November month) the 'Navratri' (The festival of nine days and nine nights) and the birthday of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj , on the Ashtami Day (the eighth lunar day of the fortnight) are being celebrated. On the day of the birthday of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, 'Saptashati Parayan' (A thorough reading of the religious book of 700 stanzas) and 'Hawan' (an oblation in to the fire) are being carried out. After this on the 'Dasara festival day' (the tenth day of the first fortnight of Aashwin month), the worship of the weapons and plundering of gold (leaves of a particular tree) are being carried out.

All devotees are being invited during the birthday anniversary festivals of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, Lord Dattatreya, Shree Swami Samarth and Gurupratipada etc. The ceremonies are being performed by using palanquin. Similar ceremonies with palanquin are also being performed during the birth and death anniversary of Shree Maharaj. Devotees attend such ceremonies from different provinces and states.

The anniversary festival of the birthday of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj is being celebrated in such a glorious and majestic way, ever overflowing with the spirit of devotion, purity of divine love, sweetness, joy, inspiration and great delight, year after year in the temple-shrine, that it will become the envy of even Gods. Devotees, young and old, ladies and gents are being observed to move about in an overpowered emotional state .The presence of Shree Maharaj is being felt in all activities right from the maingate to residential building, temple-shrine, new building and the temporary shed erected for the festival season in the form of affection, happiness and joy. It is observed that the face of each and every devotee brightens with rare pleasure and satisfaction by the participation of Shree Maharaj in any programme like,'Namsmaran' (continuous repetition of the name of God or Sadguru)' Parayan' (thorough reading) of religious books,'Pravachan' (lecture on any religious topic), 'Kirtan' (narration of

topic punctuated by devotional songs), refreshment time, tea time or serving 'mahaprasad' (serving food offered to deity), or even 'Palakhi Sohala' (festive ceremony of palanquin).

During festivals, the melodious tune from the musical instruments like clarion and kettledrums would fill the air in the surroundings of the temple-shrine. In the upper story above the maingate-(Nagarkhana) there is arrangement to keep the musical instruments like kettledrums, clarions etc. and by the melodious tune from these musical instruments singing of devotional songs as well as the religious hymns in the praise of God is being done. The maingate as well as the gates of temple-shrine are being decorated with banana plants on both sides (Toran). Before starting programme the photographs of all the deities as well as saints and sadgurus are being garlanded and worshipped. 'Devhara' (The wooden shrine or apartment) for placing the idol of Sadguru for worshipping purpose is being polished. The wooden 'devhara' (apartment-shrine) is being decorated and lighted from all sides by small electric bulbs of different colours. On one side of this 'devhara' letter 'Shree' and on the other side the letter 'Ohm' are being inscribed and lighted by electric bulbs of different colours which give a lustrous appearance. The metal idol of sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj fixed on wooden stand is placed in the centre of wooden devhara and the metal idols of Shree Swami Samarth and sadguru Shree Beedkar Maharaj fixed on wooden stands, are placed on either side of the idol of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. These metal idols fixed on wooden stands are placed on velvet carpet. All the three idols are then decorated with artistically made beautiful crowns. Earrings with the shape of a fish decorate the ears of all the idols.

Further the decoration with gold chains around the neck, the silken garments with gold border threadworks rolling down gracefully on both shoulders along with the scented flower garlands, would give added beauty to all these three idols. By seeing all these three beautifully decorated idols, the devotees unconsciously fold their hands and pay their obeisance in pure devotion with fairness and uprightness. Behind these idols, beautifully coloured full size oil painting of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj is placed. The wooden devhara with these three idols is placed in a palanquin and taken in a procession by singing 'Bhajan' (religious hymns in the praise of God) inside the compound of the temple-shrine. In the palanquin festive ceremony the slow measured beating of the cymbal (musical instruments 'Jhanj' as well as taal) by Shree Maharaj and the pause in the musical beats produced from the cymbals as well as mridang' (a kind of musical tabor) by the devotees would decrease or increase in tune accordingly and this indirectly would give more inspiration and activity to the devotees while dancing as well as singing of Bhajan (repetition of religious hymns in the praise of God or Sadguru) and acclaiming loudly the name of Sadguru.

In the palanquin festival ceremony, the devotees remain fully absorbed for one hour to one and half hours, in the religious subjects being narrated by Shree Maharaj. In short, each and every devotee who comes to the Temple-shrine completely forgets about one's daily routines, family responsibility, service and business problems etc. The words "I" and "Mine" are

forgotten by every devotee participating in the palanquin festive ceremony and get fully absorbed in the ceremony along with other devotees, enjoying the feeling of divine presence. Devotees also fully enjoy the singing of Bhajan (singing of religious hymns in the praise of God) as well as abhang (singing of hymns) in sweet and pleasant notes in tune with the beats produced by the musical instruments, the lute (a guitar-like musical instrument with pear shaped body), the cymbals and mridang (a kind of musical tabor).

Shree Maharaj had specially got prepared one hundred pairs of cymbals, each pair weighing about 800-850 grams and also a beautiful lute from Ahmednagar. He also got specially prepared one pair of horseshoe. If one wants to see the majestic glory of God, one should witness the same by remaining present in the palanquin festive ceremony of the temple-shrine at Pune. Even at Shree Kshetra Dervan, similar ceremony is being performed.

Shree Maharaj desired that the devotees who come for the festival should not go out of the temple shrine till the festival is over, as during the festival, the devotees are in the divine proximity and by going out, they might get involved in external temptations. Hence he made all the arrangements for accommodation, refreshment and meals for the devotees who come from outside Pune as well as from Pune City. In the plot No 937-B, a new residential building and an open shed with slabs have been constructed. The gents are accommodated in the open shed and ladies are accommodated inside the new residential building. All facilities like bathroom and toilets have been provided inside the building and for gent's two bathrooms and three toilets have been provided outside the residential building. There is a separate kitchen meant for festive occasion and all types of vessels required for cooking, made of either brass or copper, have been provided at Pune as well as Shree Kshetra Dervan.

Initially, the food was being served in 'patra val' (a plate formed of leaves tucked together) and 'drone' (a hollow saucer made by stitching leaves.) but now the same has been replaced by steel plates and vati (a saucer shaped vessel). For serving tea and coffee in hot condition, thermos -flasks have been arranged. For cooking, gas cylinders and gas stoves have been arranged. Tea is served at fixed time and the breakfast is served at 9.30 A.M. to all during festivals. Since the anniversary birthday festival of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj is celebrated during Kartik month (November or December month) there would be severe winter in Pune. To meet the severe cold, Shree Maharaj had made arrangements for additional beddings, cover-lets, pillows, carpets etc. depending upon the day to day increase in the growth of devotees visiting the temple-shrine.

Shree Maharaj would pay personal attention to see that no inconvenience is caused to any of the devotees coming to the temple-shrine during the festival. At night, Shree Maharaj would personally see that all the devotees are provided with essential items like bedding coverlet, carpet etc. and after getting convinced, only then, he would go to sleep at about two to two thirty A.M.

and again would get up at four to four thirty A.M. The devotees also would get up early in the morning for participating in the ceremony. Shree Maharaj made special arrangements to provide hot tea to these devotees who get up in the shivering morning cold. For taking bath in the severe morning cold, arrangements are also made by lighting the special containers for bathwater. Though the different works were assigned to different male servants, it always required supervision by somebody and this work was being done personally by Shree Maharaj.

Shree Maharaj would confirm personally, the morning works like, brooming the compound of the temple-shrine clean, removing the refuse, cleaning the paved floor of the temple-shrine by wet cloth after brooming and filling up all the water tanks properly in the compound. After the male servants start their work, some people would be sent to vegetable market to get fresh vegetables and then Shree Maharaj would take bath, finish the morning prayers and then be present in the temple-shrine of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj much before the pre-determined time. By sunrise, the flag is being hoisted and prayers offered to the flag. The prayers, along with rolls of betel veeda leaves, are also offered in the temple-shrine to Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj as well as Guruparampara (the regular succession tradition of Sadgurus) and then only the festival would begin.

In the temporary shed of the temple-shrine, 'paat' (wooden seats) have been arranged for the worship as well as religious meditation of the devotees. Shree Maharaj would explain in short the importance of religious meditation to the devotees. Then the devotees would carry on the 'chintan' (meditation), manan (careful thinking-reflection), and 'dhyana-dharana' (contemplation) for a short period. In the Temple-Shrine Laghurudra (Ceremonial ablution of Lord Shiva with sacred hymns) and Abhishek (Ceremonial ablution) would be in progress at that time.

For devotees, programmes like Pravachan (lectures on religious topics) reading of religious books, 'Namasmaraan' (continuous repetition of the name of God or Sadguru) and kirtan (Narration of a religious topic punctuated by music and religious songs) are being arranged. In the temple-shrine, religious programmes as well as rituals and continuous Namasmaraan, for, 72 hours, 12 hours, 24 hours, or 36 hours, depending upon the festivals are being arranged. The devotees would volunteer their names for this 'Namasmaraan' willingly. Previously, the incantation (sacred hymn) "Om Namah Shivay" (praying Lord Shiva-the third deity of the Hindu Trinity, the other two being, Lord Brahma and Lord Vishnu) was being repeated. After some years the Namasmaraan was being done with incantation of :

**“Shree Swami Samarth Jay Jay Swami Samarth  
Shree Swami Samarth Jay Jay Swami Samarth”**

Because of the whole day programmes, there would be no spare time for anyone. In spite of this busy schedule the enthusiasm of the devotees always would increase. In the evening after

the Aarti (waving of a lamp while singing religious songs before a deity or sadguru) the palanquin ceremony would start. The palanquin would complete three rounds of 'Pradakshina' (circumambulation of the Temple-shrine) of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj and this ceremony would go for four to five hours.

During first round of 'Pradakshina', Shree Maharaj would narrate gracefully on the religious hymns in praise of sadguru in the poetic form with full Divine inspiration. In next rounds of the palanquin ceremony, abhang, bhajan and goulani (singing of religious hymns in praise of God or Sadguru) are being sung. Devotees also dance and sing accordingly with full enthusiasm. After this palanquin ceremony, all devotees are served with dinner and after the dinner; Shree Maharaj would start his kirtan. This kirtan would be over by 3 am in the night.

Thus everlasting respectful ever faithfull devotional service was being rendered by Shree Maharaj to his Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. In spite of the busy schedule with the ceremony, Shree Maharaj never would make any relaxation in his daily routines like offering prayers after bath in the morning and evening, worship of God, Aarati (waving of a lamp before deity by singing a religious song) and completing the pradakshina (circumambulation) round the temple-shrine of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. All these daily routines, Shree Maharaj would carry out without any shortcomings. On the third day of the festival after the palanquin ceremony is over, Shree Maharaj would start Lalit Kirtan (narration of a religious topic punctuated by music and songs), which would continue through night till morning. After this is over, Shree Maharaj would personally distribute coconut, 'Veeda' (roll of betal leaves), 'Battasa' (sweetmeats) and the flowers (Shevanti Flowers) offered at the feet of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj to each and every devotee. This was the only opportunity for all the devotees who come to the temple-shrine, to offer salutation to Shree Maharaj. Otherwise Shree Maharaj never liked anybody offering him salutation in the presence of his sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj.

On the third day of the festival, the prize distribution ceremony for the first, second and third ranks in the recitation competition would be held. This competition would be held for boys and girls of different age groups.

After this festival is over, the devotees who come from outside Pune would be in a hurry to go. For these devotees, necessary breakfast, meals and prasadam would be provided. Shree Maharaj also would make arrangements to send prasadam to places like Mumbai, Chiplun, and Ratnagiri etc. for those devotees who could not attend the festival. **Simply one would be amazed to see the precautions taken by Shree Maharaj to keep intact the different articles utilised in the festival. Especially the extra precautions taken to preserve the full size oil painting of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj can be highly appreciated.**

In Dervan and Pune, the musical instruments like, harmonium, tabla, tambora (guitar with four strings) veena (lute), taal (pair of cymbals) mridang (a kind of tabor) are being kept in separate wooden boxes for safety. The different types of articles required for the performance of the religious ceremonials in a number of sacrifices are being properly maintained.

For accommodating all the devotees coming for the festivals, an additional two story building was constructed during 1981 and named as 'Gurukripa', on the plot No. 937-C. All the twenty rooms as well as 10-12 bath rooms, 12-15 toilets in the residential building and the new building 'Gurukripa' are cleaned on daily basis. The magnificent open sheds and the gardens are swept, cleaned twice in a day and the rubbish burnt in a large open mouth vessel of stone. The sweeping and cleaning of the temple-shrine, residential buildings, the open sheds and gardens is so effectively carried out daily that even a flower, petal, a blade of grass or leaf of Tulasi (holi basil) would not be found any where in the temple shrine, residential building, open shed or garden.

The usual seat of Shree Maharaj was in the southern corner of the verandha of the residential building, where one chair and a table are still preserved. You would find one photo of Shree Maharaj holding a pair of cymbals kept on that table. Above the chair, there is one switchbox fixed in the wall. A wax candle and a matchbox are always kept in that corner. Two wooden benches for devotees are kept there, one for gents and other for ladies. Near the door one bucket is kept for placing plates and cupsaucers after drinking tea etc. This bucket would be cleared and cleaned by some servant. During festival days Shree Maharaj would be seated on a cot in the varandha near kitchen. From that seat he could see the gate and pay attention to the people coming in or going out of the temple-shrine. Also from that seat, Shree Maharaj would watch all the activities going on in the open shed as well as the temple-shrine.

One could see the precautionary measures taken by Shree Maharaj in maintaining the difficult articles of temple shrine. One example is that, to prevent the destruction of paved floor by the use of a khalbatt (a pestle and mortar) Shree Maharaj got one black stone fixed in place of the slab, to enable the use of it without any breakage of the paved flooring.

Similar precautionary measures are taken everywhere for giving long life regarding the articles of the temple shrine. In the temple shrine, on the samadhi (tomb) of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, white marble padukas (impression of feet on stone, worshipped as a trace of God or Sadguru) are installed. Around the padukas, the designs of shankh (conchshell) chakra (discus of Lord Vishnu) gada (mace) padma (lotus) kamandalu (gourd) and trishul (a three pointed pike or spear) have been carved. In the innermost part of the temple shrine, the idols of Lord Vitthal Rakhumai, Lord Ganesh, Goddess Katyayani, have been installed. Outside the innermost part, in the main hall, on a chourang (a wooden stool coated with brass plate) are kept, teerth (holy

water) in a small vessel with a spout, angara (sacred ashes of incense burnt before a deity or sadguru), ginger powder in a small steel box and handkerchief of khadi.

On a second chourang are placed incense stick-stand, niranjan (a metal lamp-dish set before an idol) and articles required for idol-worship. In the drawer of the chourang are kept, match-box, incense-sticks box, wicks for the niranjan, turmeric powder and saffron kept in a 'kuri' (small mango shaped casket of silver), a small box containing a 'bucca' (black fragrance powder), 'shendur' (red lead) and ashtagandh, a scent bottle, a thread bundle for preparing flower garland, a small scissor, a 'dabhan' (a Pack-needle), a needle and a vessel (with a hole in the bottom) for continuous sprinkling of holy water etc. Underneath the chourang are kept a 'sahan' (a levigating slab) a piece of sandalwood, a small saucershaped vessel with ghee, another vessel with goundnut oil and a small spirit lamp for heating water for giving bath to the idol. Two small cloth pieces are also kept on the chourang for cleaning the chourang as well as the place in front of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. One bell made of brass is also kept suspended from the ceiling. During the arati (waving of a lamp before a deity or sadguru) in the morning and in the evening only, the bell as well as the gong are sounded.

Everyday, after the evening arati is over, the light is put on in the temple-shrine. After 10.00 p.m. all the lights except for small lamps are put off. The electric supply is taken from two sides, one from Gokhale Road and other from Canal Road, to avoid interruption in the supply. In case of the stoppage of entire supply, two generator sets, one entirely for the temple-shrine and other for the remaining supply. In addition, kerosene lamps, petromaxes also have been provided as a stand by arrangement. This precaution has been taken to avoid any inconvenience to the devotees who come for the festival and also to avoid any drawbacks in the day today programmes of the temple shrine.

In the evening a small earthen oil lamp is lit in front of 'Tulsi Vrindavan' (a raised place where holy basil is planted) and also in front of 'Audumbar' Tree (Fig Tree) where earthen oil lamps are placed in lantern type enclosures to prevent the same from being extinguished by wind or rain water. Before sleeping, the lanterns, the small earthen oil lamps, match box, oil bottle and pieces of cloth for cleaning above are being placed in a small wooden box for safety purpose, to avoid the nuisance from sparrows and other small birds and rats. Verandah (balcony), windows of the temple-shrine as well as the main door of the residential building have been provided with wire network.

The fountain in front of the residential building is started in the evening. On the eastern side of the fountain there is a flagstaff (flagpole). In the surroundings, there are trees of coconut, jackfruit, guavafruit, Kavathichafa (flower of michelia champaca) and creepers of cardamom, grapes etc. Here only there is one sandalwood tree where a cuckoo bird sings 'bhoopali' (the

morning song of prayers for awakening Gods) in the month of 'Chaitra-Vaishakha' (the first and second month of Hindu year and March-April or April-May as per English Calendar).

In the compound, at number of places, water tanks with taps are provided for washing hands, feet and face. There is arrangement to supply water to the trees, plants and creepers in the garden as well as other places. Arrangement is also made so that the rainwater always flows out of the compound and there was not a single case of accumulation of water till now, in the compound. Further the outside of the road in front of the compound wall is raised by two feet above the road level to prevent rain water from the road, coming inside the compound of the temple-shrine. In case of very heavy rain, excess water collects on the Gokhale Road (Chatushringee Road). To prevent this water coming inside the compound, Shree Maharaj privately got constructed one big gutter through plot Nos.937 A & B and one 12" cement pipe gutter through plot No. 936, so that the excess water from the road can flow in the Canal Road.

Shree Maharaj also privately got constructed one and half furlong (330 yards) footpath on the side of the compound wall. Everyday morning and evening this footpath is being swept and cleaned by the attendants of temple shrine. On festival day it is being washed with water also. On the side of the footpath (road) only there are big trees brought up and maintained by Shree Maharaj, which give shade to the public. The compound wall on the other side of the road, owned by Deccan Education Society is whitewashed and written as follows: -

***'THERE IS A TEMPLE IS HERE'***

***'PLEASE DO NOT URINATE'***

***'PLEASE DO NOT THROW DIRT'***

***'CLEANLINESS IS GODLINESS'***

***'SHREE RAM JAYARAM JAYJAY RAM'***

Due to this writing on the wall for nearly one furlong, the footpath as well as the road is kept clean by the public.

Every year, on the New Year day i.e. Gudhi Padava as per Hindu calendar (comes normally in the month March-April as per the English Calendar) as well as the birth ceremony festival of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj and death anniversary of Shree Maharaj, a new flag is being hoisted. The name of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj is written with real brocade embroidery on a silk flag.

***Shree Maharaj did not like any of his devotees to live under poverty condition. He would say "As long as I am alive and afterwards also, you would not live under poverty conditions. Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj would take care of everybody. You need not worry."***

He would arrange to distribute new clothes and also arrange to replace their broken items with new ones. One can carefully observe that in the temple-shrine, none of the items would be found in defective condition.

A number of devotees used to come to the temple-shrine at Pune, by motorcars. If Shree Maharaj notices any hidden defect in any motorcar, he would immediately get it attended by good motor technician. For excellent maintenance purpose, Shree Maharaj had brought together in his close proximity technically experts in all fields, and who are also devoted to the temple-shrine, such as architects, engineers, mechanics, plumbers, contractors, carpenters, masons, electricians, advocates, doctors, ayurvedic doctors, Tax consultant's gardeners etc.

Thus in Pune as well as Dervan, Shree Maharaj had arranged for excellent maintainance of all buildings in every respect including even the most trivial things in the buildings.

### **Establishment Of The Samadhi Of Shree Sant Seetarambua Walwalkar**

Shree Sant Seetarambua Atmaram Walwalkar hails from the village Teras Bamburde, Taluka Kudal, District Sindhudurga, Maharashtra. He studied upto seventh standard only. In the young age, he was interested in building temples and celebrating festivals. For sometime, he worked as a fitter in a cloth mill, earning one hundred rupees only. He saved some money and gave it in charity, left the job and went on a pilgrimage. After sometime, he joined the police department, worked for some years, left the job and again went on a pilgrimage.

At that time, there was one saint, Shree Dhuniwalebaba in Marathwada, Maharashtra, who directed him to go to Akkalkot and render devotional service to Shree Swami Samarth. Shree Swami Samarth also came in his visionary insight and directed him to come to Allalkot. In Akkalkot, Shree Sant Sitarambua rendered devotional service to Shree Swami Samarth under a banyan tree for nine months. Daily he was reading thoroughly Sri Shivleeramrit, collecting flowers, holy basil for the worship of God and carrying out any other work of the temple-shrine with full attention. After rendering the sevice for nine months, Shree Swami Samarth blessed him and said" My temple is there in village Sawarde near Shree Kshetra Dervan, Chiplun Taluka, Ratnagiri District. Go there and render devotional service to me."

Shree Sant Seetarambua performed journey, stage after stage without stopping and reached the village Kondmala. At Kondmala he met Late Shri Balasaheb Rajeshirke a devotee of Shree Swami Samarth. Shri Balasaheb took Shree Sant Seetarambua to the temple of Lord Dattatreya at the village Sawarde. In that temple of Lord Dattatreya, there was one great saint Shree Digambarbua Vahalkar, who intiated Shree Sant Seetarambua. Till the last moment of his

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life, Shree Sant Seetarambua rendered service to his Sadguru by remaining present near the Shrine of Sadguru Digambarbua Vahalkar.

Shree Sant Seetarambua as a mendicant used to collect uncooked food from the villages, Dervan, Kudap, Hadkani, Savarde (all in Chiplun Taluka, Ratnagiri District) and then cook the same for his daily food. He remained a bachelor throughout his life. As per the orders of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, Shree Maharaj (Shree Digambar Das Maharaj) was giving all help to Shree Seetarambua and arranged to build one small house for him, in close proximity of the Shrine of Shree Sant Vahalkarbua.

This way for about sixteen years, Shree Sant Seetarambua stayed near the shrine of his sadguru and rendered devotional service to him. But surprisingly Shree Sant Vahalkarbua gave the possession of the plot of land with the temple of Lord Dattatreya as well as the surrounding area to his son-in-law, Shri Raghunath Shembekar instead of his devoted disciple, Shree Sant Seetarambua. Shree Maharaj did not like this improper transaction and he informed about his opinion to Shree Sant Vahalkarbua.

Shree Maharaj built a small temple of Lord Hanuman on the very spot where the funeral rites of Shree Sant Vahalkarbua were carried out. Shree Maharaj brought the idol of Lord Hanuman from Madhav Baug Mumbai and installed in the newly built temple of Lord Hanuman. By that time Shree Sant Seetarambua was quite old and it became difficult for him, day by day, for collecting the alms by going out. At the same time the number of devotees coming to the shrine of Shree Sant Vahalkarbua was increasing. Hence for the survival of Shree Sant Seetarambua, Shree Maharaj purchased some agricultural land as well as a pair of bullocks and gave the same to Shree Seetarambua, for cultivation. The villagers within the area of a group of villages up to a distance of about ten miles (five kos, one kos covers two miles) were getting the support of Shree Sant Seetarambua. Since he had the good knowledge of medicinal herbs, he used to help the villagers with herbal medicines. He also used to give Vibhuti (sacred ashes of incense burnt before a deity) and sacred thread for needy villagers. Thus he was rendering selfless public service.

Shri Raghunath Shembekar, the son-in-law of Shree Sant Vahalkarbua did not approve of this prosperity showered on Shree Sant Seetarambua. Hence he called his son Shri Vasudev Shembekar from Mumbai to Sawarde and through him got the temple of Lord Hanuman dismantled. After this incident Shree Maharaj decided to build a small house and temple of Lord Hanuman for Shree Sant Seetarambua on a plot of land purchased from Shri Manyasaheb Rajeshirke. Accordingly Shree Maharaj built the temple and installed the same idol of Lord Hanuman, recovered from the temple dismantled by Shri Shembekar. But unfortunately while the building of the house for Shree Sant Seetarambua was in progress, Sant Seetarambua left this mundane existence and went away on 18<sup>th</sup> January 1969 (Magh Shuddha Pratipada Shaka 1811

as per Hindu Calendar). At the place where the funeral rite was carried out, Shree Maharaj erected a small shrine.

**In the memory of Shree Sant Seetarambua, Shree Maharaj established one charitable Trust by name “Shree Sant Seetarambua Walwalkar Charitable Trust, Mumbai”.**

The main object of this Trust is as follows:

To offer financial assistance to Educational Institutions, needy students, as well as make available maximum educational facilities in and around Shree Kshetra Dervan, Taluka- Chiplun, District.- Ratnagiri, Maharashtra.

To spread the knowledge about hygiene (health) amongst common people and make available modern medical facilities like, dispensary, hospital etc.

To create awareness and offer assistance to common people regarding improved techniques in agriculture, planting and developing fruit-trees, vegetables, flowers, other trees and water supply etc

To create new temples, educational centres (for imparting essential and purificatory rites or ceremonies amongst the Hindus), temple-shrines, as well as to carry out the replacement of old idols in the temples including the complete renovation of temples for the maintenance and upholding the tradition of humanitarianism and Sanatan Arya Vedic Dharm (the original form of Hindu Religion based purely on the Holiest Hindu Scriptures-the Four Vedas).

To try for the growth and prosperity of literature, society culture and individuals.

In 1972, the construction of the temple-shrine of Shree Sant Seetarambua was completed. In the first worship ceremony of the temple-shrine, Shree Sant Gagangiri Maharaj, Shree Sant Kuvalekar Maharaj (Devrukh) and Shree Sant Karkhanis Maharaj were present. A large number of devotees from Mumbai, Pune, Ratnagiri and other places had also come to attend that worship ceremony of the temple-shrine. After this, whatever new great and remarkable works carried out by Shree Maharaj in Shree Kshetra Dervan, through Shree Sant Seetarambua Walwalkar Charitable Trust can be said to be unexpected and simply remarkable.

Due to the poverty and shortage of other facilities in the villages, the people had to go out to the cities for all types of jobs including even odd jobs for day labourer and even for education purpose. To stop this exodus of people to the cities, Shree Maharaj decided to create employment opportunities in the villages. He could collect a good amount of donation for the Trust from rich

and generous people of Mumbai and Pune cities. He even took loan when required. With this money he purchased for the Trust, agricultural land and other land. Thus he created new jobs for all cadres like Blacksmith, Carpenter, Potter and also for those who would like to do various types of jobs in the fields on daily basis.

“Work for anyone who is ready to work” is not simply a slogan but being observed in actual practice here. In fact in Dervan about one hundred fifty day-labourers have been employed on daily basis. Payment is done every Monday, on weekly basis. Since the poor villagers started getting salary in hand every week, they were very happy. Most of them got their pledged lands released from the pawnbrokers. The Trust also gave them training by practical experiments as to how to get the maximum crop output from the field even under various difficult situations. The Trust also trained the villagers as to how to divert rainwater in the river known as Kashyapi river and put a dam to the river so that the river water can be preserved for a longer time. This has been done for the last forty years by strictly following the advice of Shree Maharaj and could reap the advantage of the damming of the Kashyapi river. This work has been highly praised by Maharashtra Govt.

Since Shree Maharaj was aware of the advantages of the careful preservation of the trees, he started the project forty years back only, to plant and cultivate the trees, like Guava, Mango, Jackfruit, Ratambi fruit tree (Kokam, *Garcinia purpurea*), Bhela tree, Ain tree, (large timber tree) Subabhool, Gum-Arabic tree, Khair tree (*Acacia catechu*) Jamb (Timber tree) Jambhool tree, Avali tree (*Phyllanthus Emblica*) Teak wood tree, Neem tree etc.

In the temple-shrine at Dervan, Shree Maharaj has made arrangement for lodging and boarding of thousands of devotees, who come for the festivals in addition to the already existing staff and devotees. In addition to other precautionary measures, like steel doors etc., shree Maharaj has also provided generator sets, petromaxes, lanterns, small kerosine lamps etc., as an alternative for the interruption in electric supply.

Initially the entire compound of the temple shrine at Dervan was consisting of rocky bed and completely plain without any vegetation. There was no water in the river. under such difficult situation; Shree Maharaj solved the problem of water shortage by digging new wells, tubewells and even by water tankers from outside. Thick layers of earth covered the rocky surface in the compound and trees of coconut, betalnut, banana, Mango, Guava, and plants of various types of flowers were grown. Thus the barren plain of rocky bed was transformed into a “Nandanvan”(the pleasure garden of God Indra). Even the agricultural land was transformed into a land of nutritional value of high quality and a good crop of rice was taken out during monsoon season, In addition to this, good crop of legumes, maize, sugarcane, vegetables and fruits etc. was also being produced.

For the works to be done in detail with all particulars, if additional small general outlines are well planned if a person is industrious, with full of enthusiasm and energy and also possessing the knowledge to do the work in right direction, then one can achieve success by crossing over all the hurdles even under extreme adverse conditions. This was what Shree Maharaj has displayed to the people by doing allround development of Dervan and its surrounding areas.

### Temples Of Dervan

In Dervan, there are temples of, Lord Kedarnath, Goddess Kalika, Rudrakalika, Zolai, Jarimari Vardan, Lord Hanuman and Lord Shiva. Since these temples had become quite old, they needed immediate repairs. Shree Maharaj fully renovated all these temples with all improvements. He also built the temple of Lord Vithoba at Chavanwadi, Dervan. He provided electric light in all these temples.

For the Proper maintenance of the temples as well as to keep up the practice of daily worship of the idols in the temples, Shree Maharaj made the provision of rice and honourarium on monthly basis to the every officiating Brahmin of the temple. He even arranged the provision of lamp oil and incense to all the temples. The Trust also arranged to build the Devdatta Temple of Sawarde.

### Social Work Done By Shree Maharaj

In Dervan, the school building of the District Board was in a very poor condition. The villagers of Dervan informed this to Shree Maharaj. Shree Maharaj personally inspected building. He, through the Trust got the School Building renovated, with two additional rooms. The galvanized iron plates with tiles covered the roof. The balcony got closed with iron mesh and a separate door. Separate toilets were provided for boys and girls in the compound. The school compound was covered by stonewall with a main gate with locking arrangement. This also prevented the vagabond animals coming inside the compound. A Flagstaff was installed for hoisting Flag. The school was maintained in a clean and proper condition. In 1993 as per the request of the teachers, Shree Maharaj got built up one raised square in the school compound for playing dramas or any other programmes.

Shree Maharaj also arranged for financial help as well as scholarship to poor, needy and meritorious students studying in schools at Dervan, Kudap Hadkani and Sawarde. This system is

still followed in the school. For creating fondness amongst students of first to fourth standard and just to encourage them to attend the school regularly, Shree Maharaj arranged for the issue of multicoloured raincoats to these students. The poor and needy students were also provided with textbooks note books and schoolbags. In Anganwadi and Balwadi, a small building was built in 1992 and toys for children worth rupees fifteen thousand were provided. In the entire District Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, these schools have been considered as Ideal schools and the teachers are very proud of these schools. He arranged for the renovation of schools at Sutarwadi, Dervan and at Kasarwadi Sawarde. Then out of the Trust properties on one plot, he got one building constructed. The subpost office is located in this building. In this building arrangement is also made for accommodating the office of Village officer, the office of Village municipality and Police outpost.

In Dervan, there was a lot of problem due to wild and vagabond cattle. Shree Maharaj got a Kondwada (a pen or enclosure for cattle) built and handed it over to the village municipality. He also got built one Veterinary Hospital alongwith a residential quarter for the concerned veterinary doctor. In Dervan, cows and bulls of Kathewadi, Surati and Gir breed have been tended by Shree Maharaj. The calves of bulls and the cows are being given to the villagers free of cost, as the villagers were unable to purchase them because of financial shortage.

Inspite of the flow of Kashyapi river in the villages, there is acute water shortage, as the river gets dry in the summer, even with storage of water by a waterdam in the river, during rainy season. Previously during summer period, water was being supplied by watertankers to the villages. This water was being purchased and brought from MIDC, Khedi near Chiplun, which is about 22-23 kms from Dervan. But nowadays the water is being brought from Ambetkhol Dam, located at 10-12 kms from Dervan. Shree Maharaj started this social work some years back and it is still prevailing now, by the inspiration and will power of Shree Maharaj. The Govt. project for water supply in Dervan area was given up in the middle only. The same project, with increased cost, was got sanctioned by the Trust, and also got completed by 1993. Thus regular water supply was restored to Dervan area.

For about sixty lady students from villages-Sawarde, Dervan, Kudap, Hadkani, Kuthare, Yegav, Nayashi and Agave, learning tailoring vocation, the Trust helped them to purchase the sewing machines, by paying twentyfive percent of cost of the machines. The Trust also built a concrete bridge on the river Kashyapi which helped people to cross the river. Initially the medical facility was provided twice in a week during 1.30PM to 3.00 PM in the Trust dispensary for the villagers. From 1991 onwards 24 hours facility was started in the dispensary by appointing a residential doctor and free medicine was provided for needy people. In serious cases, the patients are being taken in the Trust vehicles to cities like Chiplun, Ratnagiri, Karad, and Mumbai etc. for treatment. This facility is being utilised by about 60-90 patients everyday in Dervan and surrounding areas.

The trust also helped about three hundred needy villagers of Dervan, Kudap, Sawarde, Hadkani, Talsar, Durgawadi, Kuthare, Palvan, Agave, Terav, Kajarkond, Kosabi, Phurus by replacing thached roofs of their houses by Manglore tiles.

In the year 1992, the Trust provided free of charge, blankets to about eight hundred farmers. In the year 1993 it also provided blankets at one third price of the market rate to about five hundred farmers. Further every year the Trust provides free of charge cow or bullock to about thirty to forty needy farmers who are capable to feed the animals. In Dervan, Kondmala, Kudap, Sawarde, Phurus, Nandgaon, about two hundred poor and promising Students studying in first to tenth standard, text books and notebooks are given free of charge every year. For students studying in fourth to tenth standard, those who pass the examination with first, second and third rank are being awarded with a scholarship of minimum of fifteen rupees. The advantage of this facility is normally available for students from Dervan, Kudap, Sawarde and Phurus.

Whatever rice grown in the compound of the Trust property is being given to villagers at concessional price. Four times in a year, on the eve of main festivals the Trust provides edible oil and sugar to the local people at a price lesser than that of rationing shop. Twice in a year, the villagers are given clothes free of charge. On 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1978, the Trust had arranged for a gathering of the farmers from the areas of Dervan, Kudap, Hadkani, Kasarwadi and Sawarde, in the Trust compound. Shri Jagannathrao Jadhav, the concerned minister of that district was the chief guest and the MLA Shri Rajaram Shinde was presiding. In this function, through the Chief guest, the Trust distributed clothes for more than three hundred villagers, free of charge.

To initiate saving habit amongst the students, the Trust helped about three hundred students in opening the post office saving accounts by spending rupees fifty per student, as initial deposit. Shree Maharaj has carried out tremendous work for the human life vide three Trusts vizly, "Shree Vitthalrao Joshi Charities Trust" Mumbai, "Shree Sant Seetarambua Walawalkar Charitable Trust" Mumbai and "Shree Guruseva Charitable Trust" Mumbai. While doing this work, Shree Maharaj never expected financial help from any Govt. organisation. Not only that, he never took advantage of any Govt. project. He was of a clear opinion that by not taking such help or advantage from any Govt. organisation or project, he need not compromise regarding the high principles of his life with anybody else. On the contrary, Shree Maharaj had given help to the Govt. projects when Shri Vasantdada Patil was the honourable Chief Minister of Maharashtra, by donating rupees one lakh to the Chief Minister's relief fund for supplying drinking water to famine relief programme.

In the beginning, to collect the donation for the Trust, Shree Maharaj was sending his disciple and trustee, Shri K.L. Walawalkar, Shri D.N. Banavali, Shri V.M. Tikekar, Shri K.M. Tikekar, Shri S.D. Muni, Dr. S.D. Joshi etc, to, The Titwala temple every Sankashti Chaturthi

day(the fourth lunar day of the second half of every month), The Siddhivinayak temple Dadar every Tuesday, the temple of Lord Shiva Ambarnath, every Mahashivratri day(A great religious festival held on the fourteenth day of second half of the month of Magh as per Hindu Calendar and Feb. or March month as per English Calendar). These devotees were to stand in front of the temple holding a tin coinbox in the hand and sounding the same asking for donations from the devotees coming to the temple.

Besides this, to raise the fund, a souvenir was published during 1970-1974 on behalf of Shree Sant Seetarambua Walawalkar Charitable Trust. During the same period, various entertainment programmes were arranged in Shanmukhanand Hall, Sion-Matunga, like that of wellknown Shri Gopi Krishna, singers Shri Hridaynath Mangeshkar, Smt Vani Jayaram, wellknown music director Shri Vasant Desai and orchestra of Melody Makers. In addition to this, the 'Anarkali' dance programme of the famous actress Asha Parekh in Birla Matushri Hall, 'Soujanya Aishi Taishi' drama in famous Shivaji Mandir theatre at Dadar 'Lagnachi Bedi' drama in Shanmukhanand Hall and 'Swayam Siddha' drama in Sahitya sangh Hall Girgaon, Charni Road, were also arranged.

By the above programmes, enough fund could not be raised. Hence Shree Maharaj directed his Trustees to approach big industrialists like Smt. Sumati Moraraji, Shri Arvind Mafatlal etc., But these efforts also did not give any results. It seemed as though lofty principles of selfless Charity had become extinct. As a last resort. Shree Maharaj thought of raising the required fund for the Trust through common people only. For that he got printed donation coupons worth one-rupee up to hundred rupees. This scheme became successful in raising adequate fund and the Trust could carry out a number of works. In addition to this, the devotees of Shree Maharaj belonging to Gujarati Community, donated generously towards the Trust. Not only this, a number of devotees of Shree Maharaj, who belonged to fixed income group, also donated certain amount of their income towards the Trust.

In the Temple-Shrine of Shree Baba Maharaj at Pune, the floor of the room where Shree Maharaj was to sleep is made up of light blue coloured Kota stone. This kota stone is having a border of Kadappa stone. During that period, this entire floor was covered by lustrous tinge of the golden colour which would shine like pure gold. By seeing this once, Shree Ashokrao Joshi, now known as Shree Kaka Maharaj, asked Shree Maharaj about this shining lustre of gold. Shree Maharaj replied " This is pure gold lustre. Can you not understand this much?" Shree Kaka Maharaj replied "we are stepping on the Goddess Laxmi" Shree Maharaj replied " The place of Goddess Laxmi is at the feet of Lord Vishnu and that is the final place of goddess Laxmi. If she goes up, above that position then that particular man becomes uncontrollable and gets intoxicated with wealth. We should not become like a tree but remain at the level of rush grass only."

By these words it becomes very clear that Shree Maharaj was fully blessed by Goddess Laxmi. Hence the various projects undertaken by him, were getting completed without any financial shortage.

**Strangely enough, when Shree Maharaj took Mahasamadhi (the last conscious communion with God), the golden tinges seen earlier disappeared except for one or two places. In the same room, also known as a place of abode and where Shree Maharaj usually slept, he was to perform 'Paksh' (the Shraddha performed in the dark fortnight of Bhadrapad month as per Hindu calendar and the month of August or September as per English calendar, to the manes of one's male ancestors) and Shraddha (A ceremony performed periodically in the honour of a dead relative) of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj, Late Sow Durgatai (The wife of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj), as well as, the mother and father of Shree Maharaj. In these ceremonies of Paksh and Shraddha, the spot, where Shree Maharaj was to offer 'Pindadana' (A ball or lump of rice offered to the manes at a Shraddha by the nearest relative) the holy feet of Lord Vishnu have been imprinted and these prints are still existing.**

### Creating Shivshrushti At Dervan

After completing the memorial of Shree Sant Seetarambua, Shree Maharaj decided to get the surroundings developed in a unique way, by raising a memorial of Shree Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, who is revered as a deity by whole of Maharashtra. Shree Maharaj wanted that the very depiction of king Shivaji's valourous, chivalrous and virtuous deeds through this memorial, should awaken his fellow countrymen from the slumber of sluggishness and free them from the vices of selfishness. He also wanted the depiction of each incident of this great personality in an exquisite form around this memorial which would fill the heart of every visitor with the light and fire of the supreme form of self honour.

For those who believed in the sacred concept of Hindu nation, Shree Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj is the symbol of self-respect, self-honour and the esteemed form of Hindu identity. He was that great soul who left an undelible mark upon the history of this world by way of his supreme qualities, the action oriented approach mingled with uprightness. He inspired the people, with ideals of patriotism, to sacrifice everything in the interest of the nation. He also inculcated in the minds of the people the supreme thought that only selfless and disinterested efforts can lead a nation to a glorious path. Such memorial of Shree Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj is nowhere else found in the whole of India except at Shree Kshetra Dervan and the Fort at Sindhudurg, Maharashtra.

Out of a feeling of reverence for him people sing Powadas( ballad-like poems) in his honour. People pride themselves in extolling his name with acclamations. Slogans expressing resolve to cherish the high ideals set by him and to continue the principles of virtuous traditions left behind by him are shouted.

Immediately Shree Maharaj began Translating his thoughts into action. Things were planned meticulously. Planning with all the minutest details was an inseparable part of his personality and it was required before undertaking such a gigantic task. It was his earnest desire that the proposed memorial should kindle the fire of patriotism in the minds of the visitors.

Shree Maharaj also took a decision of raising a memorial in the honour of Shree Samarth Ramdas along with the memorial of King Shivaji. He had nurtured this thought right from the age of twelve.

**With the supreme zeal and meticulous planning of Shree Maharaj, the memorial of King Shivaji as well as that of Shree Samarth Ramdas got completed before the Shivjayanti Day in 1981. On 5<sup>th</sup> May 1981, on ShivJayanti Day, the ShivSamarth Mandir was inaugurated by a member of parliament as well as the president of the then Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee, Smt. Premalatai Chavan, under strong opposition by local politicians like Shri Govind Nikam and Shri Ibrahim Modak, who felt this was against their vested interests. Smt. Premalatai Chavan was so much impressed that, in an interview given to the All India Radio New Delhi, she declared with full of praises “Nowhere else such a temple of Shree Shivraya exists, than at Dervan. I have never come across such a Trust carrying selfless humanitarian services irrespective of caste or creed”.**

Later on, the sculptors were busy in creating soldiers, troopers and the masons were busy erecting the fortifications. Shivshrushti was no longer a dream now as it had started assuming a concrete form. It was the realisation of a glorious dream of Shree Maharaj. It was like erecting a monument upon the sacred land of Dervan, which would be seen by the coming generations of Indians, as the highest symbol and represent their long cherished feelings of self-respect and self-honour. It would also inspire them to be virtuous and upright. Dervan a remote corner of India, hidden from the publicity of any type, was now witnessing the emergence of a true but artistic depiction of the glorious cultural past of our nation, that something to be proud of. It deserved to be cherished in the best possible way, that which, left behind a tradition of the highest order to be inherited by the coming generations for their upliftment and constant progress.

The associates have made a valuable contribution in providing a realistic form to Shree Maharaj's aspirations by way of sculptures and depiction of historical events at Shivashrushti.

This multicoloured world, the grand sculptures and the presentation of the glorious historic past, leave a bewitching and awe-inspiring effect upon the minds of the visitors.

In the temple premises, King Shivaji has been depicted as riding a horse. Sant Ramdas, Sant Tukaram and Sant Namdeo are found standing in their life size forms. There is a 'Gomata' (Cow depicted as the mother of all) temple. There are infantry soldiers, Guards, virile men. Upon the walls of the assembly-hall that look like a portica are depicted memorable scenes from King Shivaji's life history, such as, the occasion when the daughter-in-law of an officer of a province of Kalyan, Thane District, Maharashtra, produced in the royal court of King Shivaji, the occasion when the frog came out of the stone while Sant Ramdas and King Shivaji doing the supervision work of the fort, the occasion when the fingers of Shahistekhan cut by the sword, the occasion when King Shivaji took oath with his companions at Rohideshwar regarding self government and prayed before Goddess Jagadamba, the occasion when King Shivaji took blessings from Ayisaheb Jijaai, the occasion when the lady expressed gratitude for receiving the assurance of protection from the royal court, the occasion when the treacherous Afzalkhan was taught a final lesson of life time before he was slain, The occasion when Baji Prabhu Deshpande sacrificed his life for the protection of the ideals of loyalty. Also, the memorable occasion of King Shivaji's naming ceremony as well as, the most important occasion of the coronation ceremony of King Shivaji have been depicted.

On the bastion (a part of protecting wall that projects) of the Fort, small splendid umbrellas have been arranged. Under one such umbrella, Shree Samarth Ramdas Swami, shown with his hand raised blessing everybody and under the side umbrella, Shree Sant Tukaram Maharaj, shown dancing and fully engrossed in kirtan (Narration of a topic punctuated by music). Two mavalas (soldiers) shown playing trumpets and creating palpitation through dreaded fear amongst the enemies. There is depiction of young Shree Shivaba (King Shivaji) taking education from Dadoji Kondadev and the occasion of dedicating his kingdom to his Guru (preceptor) Shree Samarth Ramdas. The re-acceptance of Netaji Palkar to the Hindu faith, who had been treacherously converted to the Islam faith by Aurangzeb, to show the world that a true Hindu can never be compelled to be an apostate. Aurangzeb had no other alternative except that of licking dust because of a lightning attack by King Shivaji on the city of Surat, now Gujarat state. During the course of this invasion, the Subhedar (Officer of a province) of Surat sent an assassin in the guise of an ambassador. But the alert and loyal bodyguards of King Shivaji frustrated the Subhedar's plans by killing that assassin. This scene has been depicted so exquisitely that it gives a hair-raising effect to an onlooker. A great culture, the parallel of which can nowhere be found, which considers others wife, a worthy of respect as one's own mother in its pictorial and sculptural form, is shown here to welcome any visitor with open arms.

At one stage of life, one develops a feeling of going to the holy land and absorbing oneself daily in the act of worshipping, to have the most needed contentment. One can certainly say that, if one visits Dervan and comes in contact with Shivshrushti and Shiv-Samarth-Mandir,

one's life's desire in this regard can find real fulfilment. A visit to Shiv-Samarth-Gad will convince the mind of a youth, of the fact, that Indian culture is worthy of being adored by the world. The youth will realise that our life has some definite purpose. The youth will also be inspired to strive for the realisation of that dream, which Shree Maharaj had visualised for India, assuming the role of world-preceptor.

Now Dervan village came to be known as "Shree Kshetra Dervan". Because of this, school and collage students started coming there on picnic and take blessings of all the deities of Shree Kshetra Dervan. Thousands of religious people from whole of Maharashtra started visiting Shree Kshetra Dervan for the celebrations of the festivals in temples, temples shrine, as well as, that of Shree Shivraya(King Shivaji) birth anniversary.

**On 20<sup>th</sup> March 1984, Shivjayanti Day, the honourable Shree Shivajirao Bhosle, acclaimed"Shree Maharaj has transformed Dervan village into Shivkshetra(holy place of pilgrimage Shree Kshetra Dervan)" For the same function, the Chief of Shivasena, the honourable Shree Balasaheb Thakre, was also invited. He declared in his speech " Shree Maharaj has taken up a very noble project of resurrection of the eternal Aryan Religion of Vedas. For that, selfless and meticulously planned work is in progress. Everyone of us should give our full cooperation and assurance for this work. The blessings of Shree Maharaj would give inspiration and bring success in our noble work"**

**After this meeting with Shree Maharaj, the Shivasena, went on prospering day by day, with the full blessings of Shree Maharaj.**

Shree Das Navami and Shivajayanti are being celebrated every year in Shree Kshetra Dervan. Every year on 'Falgun Vadya Trutiya'(Third day of Falgun after fullmoon, as per Hindu calender and Feb or March month, as per English calendar) Shree Shivaray(King Shivaji) birh anniversary, is being celebrated with great pomp and enthusiasm, at Shree ShivSamarth Gad, Shree Kshetra Dervan, in the presence of thousands of devotees of Shree Shivarya, who come there from various corners of Maharshttra. The function starts at morning 10 a.m. in the assembly of the devotees . The devotees present in the assembly express their views on the greatness of the celebrity and majesty of the power of Shree Shivaray in their own words and the offer their gratitude and reverence, at the feet of the great King,considered as Yugpurush(A Greatman of the Era). There would be pindrop silence and discipline in the assembly during the function.

After Brahmins recite "ShantiSookta"( A hymn recited in the preliminary ceremonies to avert inauspicious accidents during any religious celebrations) and Eeshastavan(recitation in praise of Lord Shiva), the actual programme starts.Then the orators give speeches. After this, as per the direction and blessings of Shree Maharaj, the meeting ceremony would be over. Then throughtout the day, the programmes like 'bhajan'( singing of hymns in praise of

God),Pravachans(discourse) and Kirtan(Narration of a topic punctuated by music) would go on. The devotees present in the assembly, would be provided with tea, refreshments and prasad(food offered to the Deity) . Though this function of Shiva-jayanti is celebrated in a small place like Dervan, located in a corner of Maharashtra, people from all corners of Maharashtra come and attend this celebration with great zeal and express their love,gratefulness towards Shree Shivaraya, as well as, to get the blessings of Shree Maharaj by remaining in his company till the function is over.

Right from 4 P.M. onwards, the preparation for the Palanquin ceremony of Shree ShivChhatrapati(King Shivaji) would be in progress. In the fully decorated palanquin,the idol of Shree Shiv Chhatrapati would be placed. With sounding of musical instruments like Bheri(large kettle drum) Tutaris(tumpets) Nal(a sort of tabor) Mrudung( a kind of tabor) Tal(a pair of cymbals) Veena( a lute ) dhol(a large drum) Tashe(leathern drum) and shouting by thousands of evotees:-

“Shree Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj ki Jay”

“Shree Samarth Ramdas Swami Maharaj ki Jay”

“Shree Sadguru Vasudevanant Saraswati Swami Samarth Maharaj ki Jay”

“Shree Sant Seetarmbua Maharaj ki Jay”

“Shree Swami Samarth Maharaj ki Jay”

as though shaking the heavens , the planquin of Shree Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj starts from the front side of temple shrine of Shree Sant Seerambua at five o'clock in the evening. Amongst the crowd of devotees, carrying Chhatra-Chamars(the insignia of royalty) the Chowries(fly Whiskers) and Pankhe(small paper fans), Abdageer (an ornamented umbrella) flags and banners with the signs of Garud (eagle) Hanuman (Lord Hanuman –monkey God) and Sun and Moon and shaking, dancing as well as sounding of musical instruments the palanquin procession moving slowly with great pleasure and enthusiasm going around the temple shrine of Shree Sant Seetarambua and further proceed to the village borders of Dervan Sawarde, finally upto the temple shrine of Shree Sant Jnananath and then only it would return. On its return at the gate of the fort(Gad) there would be a ceremony of the waving around the palanquin by leaves of Neem tree with salt and mustard and thereafter again by waving of the platter containing milkwater and lighted lamps. Finally the palanquin would be stopped in front of the temple of Shree Shivraya and one hundred and eight Suvasinis( a woman with husband living) would wave a lamp around the idol of Shree Chhatrapati Shivaji. Then this palanquin would again come to the temple shrine of Shree Sant Seetarambua and complete the third round.

During the palanquin festive ceremony the devotees would narrate on the spot,Abhangas(singing of religious hymns in praise of God or Sadguru), move in a circular tract while shouting and singing bhanjans(hymns in the praise of Gods) and in between show their skill and expertness in the use of lazims( bow with a chain) lathikathi(big sticks) dandpatta(exercise with defencing stick in one hand and the patta or a kind of long two-edged sword in the

other hand) as well as the use of swords. The palanquin festive ceremony would go on for four to five hours. Because of the arrangement of adequate lighting as well as provision of multicoloured lamps, the mural paintings on the wall become lively. Simultaneously, the dust particles shooting up in the air due to the rhythmical dancing in circular tract in tune with the slow beating of the drums and also the melodious sound waves heard in between from the Tutarys (trumpets) as well as bherys (large kettle Drums) would double up the enthusiasm of the devotees.

Then, Shree Maharaj would proclaim loudly that "Shree Chhatrapati Shivaray belonging to Maharashtra is the incarnation of Lord Shiva" This loud proclamation would be echoed by thousands of devotees. The sounding of musical instruments like tal and mrudang would simply give rise to an uproar when, under such majestic atmosphere, the palanquin moves in the fort with all pomp and it is felt as though every figure in the mural painting is trying its best to become alive for taking part in the festive ceremony to witness the grandeur of their king who had returned after about three hundred and fifty years. Shree Maharaj was to say that this celebration of the anniversary festival of birth day of Shree Shiv Chhatrapati is itself the celebration of the festival of the religion of mankind. For that reason, Shree Maharaj wanted to start this palanquin procession not only from Dervan but also from the surrounding villages. He tried from the year 1981 but did not succeed due to opposition of the political leaders. It was rather strange that, for the celebration of Shiv Jayanti, police department and the Tahsildar (Officer in charge of a sub-division of a district) were to apply the clause 144 under Indian Penal Act and stop the function.

During March 1985, as clause 144, was not applied before the Shivjayanti festival, Shree Maharaj decided to start the palanquin procession from S.T. Stand, Sawarde. Hence the procession of seven to eight thousand people, devoted to Shree Shivarya as well as Shree Maharaj, started from the S.T. Stand Sawarde, with great pomp, immense enthusiasm, red ochre flags, dhol (large drums), tashe (leathern drum) pakhwaj (a kind of tabor, drum), tutarys (trumpets) and proceeded towards Shivsamarth Gad. When it covered nearly two furlongs it was stopped by Police, who had come prepared with guns. The police took the possession of palanquin as well as the idol of Shree Shiv Chhatrapati and ordered the people to go back. Because the column 144 was applied by police, the devotees who had come for the festival from distant places of Maharashtra, like, Nagpur, Bhusaval, Jalgaon, Sangamner, Malkapur, Shree kshetra Dehu – Aalandi, Pandharpur, Lonavla, Kolhapur, satara, Pen, Ambarnath, Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri and Mumbai were all disappointed.

Ultimately on 10th March 1993, in spite of the strong opposition of the local leaders, the palanquin procession of Shree Shiv Jayanti festival could be successfully taken out right from the S.T. stand Sawarde, upto ShivSamarth Gad with the full support of police Department. Thus Shree Maharaj, himself arranged to achieve the goal as desired by him.

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## The Trust's Progress—A Saga Of Incessant Struggle

Through the socially beneficial works of the Trusts, Shree Maharaj put in relentless efforts to improve the living conditions of the oppressed villagers. But the selfish local politicians, who felt this was against their vested interests, started putting hurdles in the selfless humanitarian service projects of the Trusts. In spite of having governmental machinery at their service, these powerful leaders, refused to undertake the constructive socially beneficial works, such as, provision of free medical service, installation of borewells, employment guarantee to those who wish to work, reconstruction and repairs of schools, temples, provision of food, water, clothing, blankets, shelter, education, to weaker sections, giving scholarships, awards, uniforms, books, and stationery to students, construction of roads, bridges, and eradicating dowry practice as well as blind faith in age old misbeliefs etc. On the contrary, they wickedly misused the power to put hurdles in the welfare projects of the trust.

In this destructive work, Shri Govind Nikam and Shri Ibrahim Modak, the so-called self-proclaimed leaders of Sawarde village, Chiplun Taluka, were on the fore front. As their selfish motives could not be achieved, they tried all the wrong means to defeat the Trust by spreading rumours against the Trust.

In fact, Shri Govind Nikam, as a teacher, was dismissed from a school in Kondmala, Sawarde village, as he had misused the scholarship money of the students. Even his LIC agency was terminated. During 1972-73 when he was the chairman of Education Committee of Zilla Parishad he had committed various frauds and all were proved then. Still, because of his political manoeuvrings, he became the president of Zilla Parishad in 1977. Then in 1979, he became the General Secretary of the Ratnagiri District Congress Committee. He had the full blessings of political leaders, Shri P.K. Sawant and Shri Bhai Sawant. Shri Ibrahim Modak, the other associate of Shri Nikam, was considering himself as a self-proclaimed saviour of the minorities and weaker sections of Sawarde Village. Since 1961, for eighteen years, he ensured that the village Sarpanch remained under his control and obeyed him. Later, he made his second wife, Mumtaz, as the village Sarpanch. Though he had no profession of his own nor employment, he owned properties as well as buildings on the government land in the proper village market and also had managed to transfer huge land of the weaker sections in his name, on the strength of his political connections. Being a fundamentalist, he did not require any particular reason to oppose the Trust works or Temple works.

In spite of the severe attempts on behalf of these two so-called local political leaders, to intercept the socially beneficial works of the Trust as well as to defame the Trust, Shree Maharaj, because of his divineness, could successfully nullify these hurdles and get all the Trust's works completed. Had it been anybody else in that place, he would have left all the works and run away.

During 1978-79, the Trust had arranged cement bags for its work, from Mumbai. Out of this, Shri Nikam took hundred bags on loan. Since he failed to return the bags or the money, the Trust insisted for the payment. This hurt the ego of Shri Nikam and hence he returned the amount for bags but demanded again for one hundred bags of cement. Because of the previous experience, the Trust refused the request of Shri Nikam. This enraged him and also Ibrahim Modak. Then both declared in the public meeting “ We shall dismantle and throw every stone of this Trust” Shri N.M.Joshi the editor of daily newspaper “Sagar” also encouraged this statement in his news paper. Their statement was further supported by the blessings of the political leader, Shri P.K. Sawant and Shri Bhai Sawant.

The Trust had purchased about fifteen acres of land in the locality ‘Shericha Mal’ at Sawarde village, which is publicly a well known place. Shree Maharaj wanted to construct a hospital in this land for providing medical facilities at cheaper rates for the villagers in Dervan and surrounding areas. The devotees of Shree Maharaj located in England , Germany and other countries had agreed to supply the latest medical equipment for the hospital. But in the nick of time, Shri Govind Nikam and Shri Ibrahim Modak did not like this plan of Sawarde as it would not only make Shree Maharaj a celebrity but also increase the reverence and the influence of the Trust. Hence both started false propaganda that the location of the proposed hospital is the place of kindling the Holi fire of the Holi festival. Due to this propaganda, the people of Jayachi Wadi, tried to kindle the Holifire on ‘Sherachi Mal’ but when they realised their mistake they went to the Trust and asked for forgiveness.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> Mar 1980, The Nikam-Modak duo made declaration in the temple of Sawarde that the people have boycotted the Trust and henceforth nobody should keep any relation with the Trust. Due to this boycott, about thirtysix women, twentyfour men and eight masons all from Sawarde and employed as temporary mazdoors on daily wages in the Trust, lost their employment. Shree Maharaj was fully aware of the calamity he was facing at present and also the violent storm he would have to face in future. A time had come to make these arrogant intoxicated people of Dervan and surrounding areas, realise about the true knowledge as to who is really capable and powerful and who is not. A time had come to awaken the Hindu Society from its deep slumber of submissiveness by violent jerks and restore its pride. Time had also come to make the Hindu Society realise that, the selfless, devoid of sluggishness, duty bound works are still in existence and God himself descends down on this earth by taking a human form to carry on such works, which are freed from attachment, without any desire for rewards or expectations and with results of the activities fully dedicated to God, in addition to the protection of religion and final salvation of the people.

On 8<sup>th</sup> March 1980, one boy, Vasudev Laxman Bane was caught while stealing watermelons from the Trust’s garden and was legally handed over to the police. On 9<sup>th</sup> March 1980 he was put in the Ratnagiri remand home by the police. But on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1980 this boy

escaped from the remand home . In fact the Trust did know this boy earlier or his antecedents. But the duo Nikam-Modak tried their own selfish ends and they plotted against the Trust.

During May 1980, in that year's assembly elections, Shri Govind Nikam, rebelled against the Congress party and stood as an independent candidate, as he did not get the Congress(E) ticket . In the provocative election meetings Nikam-Modak made dirty allegations against the Trust and Shree Digambar Das Maharaj (Shree Maharaj) , that the Trust had killed the boy, Vasudev Bane. Shri N.M. Joshi the owner and editor of the local 'Sagar' newspaper, supported this duo and published these dirty allegations in the news paper.

In spite of doing all this, Shri Govind Nikam lost the election, completely outright. The news paper 'Sagar' refused to publish the replies of the Trust to their allegations. Hence to make the people aware of the true facts, on 8<sup>th</sup> April 1980, the Trust forced the 'Sagar' newspaper to print these replies in the form of an advertisement. Still the so-called honourable people of Dervan, on 18<sup>th</sup> May 1980, boycotted the Trust by keeping one coconut before the God, in the temple of Shree Deo Kedarbaji'.

Again on 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug 1980, Shri Govind Nikam and Shri Ibrahim Modak , accompanied by some Muslims and a few Hindu sympathisers from Sawarde entered forcibly the Trust's premises and disrupted the Pooja in the Maruti Temple, destroyed the rice crop in the fields belonging to the Trust, broke the boundary walls etc and went away. All this was dumbly witnessed by police-officers, district officers and tehsildar.

It was an unfortunate news for Shri Govind Nikam that Shri Vasudev Bane who had escaped from the remand home on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1980, was located in the house of Shri Ibrahim Modak during September 1980. There only, the police arrested Bane. This indicated that Shri Ibrahim Modak had only arranged for the escape of Bane from the remand home , probably with the help of police.

Some of the so-called dignitaries of the village who behaved timidly with Nikam-Modak duo, offered coconut to the village Goddess and harassed the innocent villagers by taking advantage of their blind faith in the village Goddess. They were forced to boycott the Trust. Even those who were connected with the Trust or those helping the Trust were boycotted. Such persons were threatened and beaten. People who had affection for the Trust were made naked in the market and beaten.

Such weak downtrodden and illiterate villagers who were poverty-stricken and harassed by the duo group, preferred to stay away from the Trust. Therefore, except for the labour from

Chavanwadis, no other labour was available for carrying out the Trust's projects. This did not defer Shree Maharaj. He brought 200-250 Adivasi labour from Dahanu and its neighbouring villages like Talasari, Ambesari and Vakas etc. of Thane District. These labourers had no knowledge of agriculture or construction work. Still Shree Maharaj got the farming, building the Shiv SaMuth Gad etc huge construction work done from them with a strong and unimaginable determination.

On 12<sup>th</sup> December 1980, the Nikam-Modak duo, announced in one meeting that in the ensuing Holi Festival they would make Holi of the Trust (destroy the Trust completely). Accordingly on 15<sup>th</sup> December 1980, the Datta Jayanti day, at 11.00 P.M. the whole stock of grass and the oil cake belonging to the Trust, which would have lasted for one year for nearly 70 cattles of the Trust, were burnt to ashes. Nobody could understand the gain achieved by burning this food of the dumb animals. The effect of this wrong move was felt by villagers after two years, when there was a severe drought in the area. It was impossible for the village cattle to survive without grass and oil cake. In that hour of crisis, Shree Maharaj forgave the past behaviour of the villagers and distributed to them freely, the grass and oil cake which he had brought from Mumbai, for the cattle of the Trust.

On 24<sup>th</sup> December 1980, a conference of journalists was arranged in the Trust compound. Whatever dirty allegations made and objections raised against the Trust by Shri Govind Nikam and Shri Ibrahim Modak were clarified by the Trust with documentary evidence. The Trust also explained its main aim as well as the projects so far carried out for the selfless humanitarian service, to the journalists. Shree Maharaj also explained about the scheme **'Work for all who demand'**

All these true facts about the Trust were more clearly explained in the "Maharashtra Times" by the journalist, Shri Jagan Phadnis. It was also explained as to how the local politicians like Shri Govind Nikam and Shri Ibrahim Modak with the support of the then editor of the newspaper "Dainik Sagar" Shri N.M. Joshi, were putting hurdles for their own vested interest, in the selfless humanitarian service projects of the Trust. As this paper "Maharashtra Times" had brought out all the true facts about the Trust, Shri Jagan Phadnis had to lose his job, because of the political powerful connection of Shri Govind Nikam.

On 10<sup>th</sup> March 1981, Villagers of Sawarde kindled the Holi fire (kindle wood pile) for the Holi festival on 'Sherachi Mal' and destroyed the fence enclosure. When on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1981, Shree Maharaj had been to the 'Sherachi Mal' the people from Joyashi wadi beat the Trustees and also the people working for the Trust. These people were seriously threatened that they would be killed and hence criminal cases were registered in the court against these 'Joyashiwadi' people. On that, 12<sup>th</sup> March evening itself, Shri Govind Nikam, Shri Ibrahim Modak and Shri Appashet Mohire, had decided to kill the Trust people and in the darkness, some

ruffians carried out the assault on these Trust people, on the Trust property only. Shri Appasheet Mohire, later on, stated that there were instructions from the duo Nikam and Modak, to carry on violent stone throwing on the car of Shree Maharaj also. But the villagers due to their love and implicit faith towards Shree Maharaj, did not actually carry out this stone throwing but only made a show of stone throwing just to satisfy their leaders. Though, the District Officer, under column 144, of Indian penal code, prohibited the villagers of Joyashiwadi and Sawarde as well as Trust people from going to 'Sherachi Mal', the ban was lifted on 18<sup>th</sup> March 1981, only for Joyashiwadi and Sawarde people, but the ban was made permanent for the Trust people. This example shows how the Trust was going through serious difficulty.

On 5<sup>th</sup> May 1981, the Shivjayanti Day, the statues of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Shree Samarth Ramdas Swami were to be consecrated after inauguration of the Shiva Samarth Mandir. Thousand of invitees and guests from outstation were to attend this function. The unveiling ceremony was to be done by Smt. Premalatai Chavan, the then President of Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee and Shri Abhaysinharaje Bhosle, the then Home Minister of Maharashtra Govt. Shri V.N.Deodhar, the Editor of 'Tarun Bharat' newspaper, Pune, was to be chief Guest. Because of the unstable atmosphere of Sawarde, Shri Bhosle did not attend. The unveiling ceremony was completed by Smt. Premalatai Chavan.

To make this function a complete humiliating failure, the duo Nikam-Modak along with Shri Jayasingh Surve, Shri Seetaram Laeem, Shri Prakash Rajeshirke, the son-in-law of Shri Nikam and Sayeed Khalpe, arranged to cut huge trees from the village and blocked the only road going to Dervan. The Chief Guest was travelling in a special reserved S.T.Bus. As the antisocial elements threatened to burn these buses, they were diverted to Chiplun. However those who came in private cars, jeeps etc., and those who came walking were forcibly beaten with stones, sticks and what not. The cars and motorcycles were damaged heavily.

**As the situation was worst, Smt. Premalatai Chavan was advised to proceed from Dervan to Delhi for safety sake. But She said "I will go from here, only after all the people return. Shree Maharaj is all capable of protecting me" Then after completing the consecration ceremony successfully, Smt. Premalatai Chavan left for Delhi.**

Shri Appasaheb Mohire, because of the noncooperation of his family people, left the Trust during May 1980 and joined the side of Shri Govind Nikam. But after some time, there was awakening of his sense discriminating between right and wrong and he joined the Trust again. This attitude of Shri Appasaheb Mohire was severely objected by the Nikam-Modak duo and he was beaten and made naked in the market place of Sawarde. During the year 1981-82 under the leadership of the duo Nikam-Modak, the hooliganism had reached its peak. The houses of Shri Nana Mohire, Shri Dattoba Nikam, Shri Anant Chavan, Shri Baba Tapkar, Shri Vithoba Chavan and Shri Ramchandra Bhuvad were attacked. There was violent stone throwing and burning of grass. Out of fear, Shri Pandurang Chavan left the house and ran away. Shri Vithoba Chavan went to the jungle and hid himself. These miscreants caught hold of him in the jungle

and brought him back, tied him to a pillar and severely beat him. The police refused to register any complaints. Shri Nana Mohire was running a canteen on the S.T. Stand and this canteen was burnt. His cloth shop was looted. His bullet motor cycle was completely damaged by putting a stone. Shri Nana Mohire was also running the Govt. approved country liquor shop. First these miscreants drank maximum possible liquor and then totally destroyed the shop. The miscreants also tried to burn the house of Shri Ramchandra Bhuvad and the police had to resort to firing. In that fire one cow died. The police started the enquiry but the case was suppressed due to political pressure.

Near Kajarkonda, Shri Shivram Chavan and Shri Shriram Chavan both working in the Trust, were attacked. Near 'Hadkani Gate', Shri Vasant Manyasaheb Rajeshirke, the deputy village Sarpanch was attacked and his bicycle was damaged. Near 'Hadkani Gate', the motor vehicle of Shri Shyamrao Tikekar was heavily stoned. Shri Nanda Dakave the owner of Laxmi Photo Studio, Chiplun was beaten mercilessly, when he had come to the unveiling ceremony of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj at Dervan on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1981. For the same unveiling ceremony, the relatives of Smt. Premalatai Chavan, had come on a jeep from Mumbai. They were attacked. Shri Subhash Parmaker who had come to attend the ceremony was thrown ten feet down in a gutter carrying water. But he was fortunately saved by the grace of Shree Maharaj. An elderly lawyer Shri Amritrao Bhosle, who was an ex-MLA and Ex- President of Zilla Parishad was mercilessly beaten without caring for his old age.

On 25<sup>th</sup> April 1982, the Trust was to celebrate the birth anniversary of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. As a precautionary measure, the Trust had sent a petition in advance to the then Chief Minister, as the outbreak of hooliganism in Sawarde for the previous years was fresh in mind. As a result of this petition, Shri Govind Nikam was arrested under MISA (Maintenance of Internal Security Act) on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1982. Shri Ibrahim Modak and his associates were also booked under column 151 of Police Act. All these people were freed on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1982 due to the mediation of Shri Bhai Sawant, MLC (Member of Legislative Council). After this action, there was some restraint on the hooliganism.

During January 1982 the Kohinoor Mitra Mandal had arranged for a Kabaddi Match (Hututu match - a kind of game played among children) on state level at Chiplun. Shree Maharaj personally donated rupees one thousand and five thousand rupees each on behalf of "Shree Sant Seetarambua Walawalkar Charitable Trust" and "Shree Guruseva Mandir Charitable Trust" for distribution of main prizes. Also he donated rupees five thousand as permanent deposit on behalf of "Shri Vitthalrao Charitable Trust" and two Shields, each carrying the name of one Trust, for distributing to two victorious teams. **Shree Maharaj did all these things just to impart and infuse good education, discipline, punctuality, observance of rules and regulations, physical fitness and finally development of Nationalism amongst young generation.**

After the creation of Shree Shiv Samarth Gad at Dervan it became known as Shree Kshetra Dervan. School, collage students, devotees of Shree Shivaraya in thousands, political leaders, religious people, saints and literary people from all corners of Maharashtra were coming to Shree Kshetra Dervan for attending the festival of Shree Shivaraya birth anniversary as well as taking blessings from Shree Maharaj.

Now slowly and slowly the control of the local political leaders on common public started diminishing and the people became more bold. During November 1981, Shri Jaysingh Gujar, his wife, daughter and Shri Baburao Gujar as well as his wife made an appeal on a five rupee stamp affidavit to the Trust stating "Due to the excesses of local leaders, we were unable to come on work. Now if we donot get any job we may die because of empty stomach. Hence please give us work" The Trust took them back on work.

Dervan Gramseva Mumbai Association, was working against the Trust. It held a meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1981, in Mumbai. Shri N.R. Phadke and Shri Shripad Gokhale both being the fellow students of Shree Maharaj, were also the members of this association. On every Gurupoor nima festival (worship of one's preceptor, on the full-moon day, Poor nima, of Ashadha month as per Hindu calender and the month of June or July as per English calender), Shri Phadke and Shri Gokhale were coming to the temple-shrine at Pune, for attending Gurupoornima as well as other festivals. On every occasion after the festival ceremony, Shree Maharaj was to honour Shri Phadke, Shri Gokhale and other fellow students with respect. But Shri Phadke as well as Shri Gokhale were bitterly annoyed by the strict discipline and restraint and also by the growing importance and prosperity of the Temple shrine due to Shree Maharaj. They were simply seized by selfishness only. In the association meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1981 in Mumbai, they made speeches against Shree Maharaj. They distributed printed letters also. They both along with the members of association, took an oath in the meeting to completely destroy the good name of Shree Maharaj.

In Dervan and the villages within fifteen kilometers area, the atmosphere was completely disturbed with anxiety and insecurity due to hooliganism. To fight against this serious problem, the people from the villages, Kudap, Nivali, Dervan, Kosabi, Sawarde, Nayashi, Phurus, Yegaon, Durgawadi, Hadkani and Nandgaon came together on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1983 and formed one committee under the name "Action Committee for Prevention of Injustice". On 25<sup>th</sup> March 1983, in village Kudap, a big meeting was arranged by this committee and the villagers under oath, took a decision to fight against the political leaders who created this atmosphere of anxiety and insecurity in the area. But the committee could succeed to a little extent only due to the high-handedness of the political leaders.

Shree Devadatta Temple along with the concerned land, located in front of Shree Shiv Samarth temple and Shree Shiv Samarth Gad belonged to the Trust. In this concerned land,

the shrine of Shree Jnyananath Maharaj is located. Shree Ibrahim Modak wanted to establish a 'Peer'(shrine of Moslem saint) in place of the shrine of Jnyananath Maharaj. With this intention, he covered the existing shrine of Shree jnyananath Maharaj with a green chadar( a cotton cloth) installed one green banner and ten-fifteen coloured lanterns.The then Secretary of the 'Prevention of Injustice Action Committee' shri Mama Khanvilkar brought one court order against this attitude of Shri Ibrahim Modak and arranged for police security. But this precaution failed due to political pressures.

Inspite of that, for the last few years Shree Maharaj had narrated repeatedly about the 'Eternal Principles' relating to Vedas of the Hindu Religion to the people of Dervan and other surrounding villages. He had also checked up whether these principles were being followed or not at least to some extent. Because of the labourious and fatiguing exertion of Shree Maharaj only, the Hindu society became alert . As a result of this awakening, on 24<sup>th</sup> May 1992, three years after Shree Maharaj took Mahasamadhi( the last conscious communion with God), about 1500-2000, Hindus from Dervan and surrounding villages came together, built one wall '500 ft in length and 6ft in height' by using stone, sand and cement at the sight of the shrine of Shree Jnyananath Maharaj for protection. The work was started at 6.00 AM and continued the same through night and spontaneously got completed next day morning at 4.00 AM.Further permanent enclosure was built with R.C.C. columns and slab. On 4<sup>th</sup> June 1992, the installation of the idol of Shree Jnyananath Maharaj was carried out in the presence of thousands of devotees.

The devotees were singing bhajans(hymns) in the presence of Shree Jnyananath Maharaj and this programme of singing bhajans continued day and night upto one month. The devotees who come to see Shree ShivSamarth Gad, never return without taking the blessings of Shree Jnyananath Maharaj. **It was entirely because of the extraordinary spiritual powers of Shree Maharaj only such a religious abode in the form of a temple could be created.**

By this time, the civil court gave important verdict that there was no peer(shrine of Moslim saint)but only the shrine of Jnyananath Maharaj in the Devdatta temple Trust land. During 1982-83 Shri Mama Khanvilkar, aged 84 yrs and the then secretary of the 'Action Committee for Prevention of Injustice' had gone with Shree Maharaj to the temple- shrine of Jnyananath Maharaj for taking blessings. **At that time Shree Maharaj had predicted " Mama, this temple- shrine of Shree Jnyananath Maharaj would certainly come up within no time, just like a snap with the thumb and finger. One day morning when you wake up, you would see the temple -shrine."** Shree Maharaj also further predicted " **Just like the case of Shree Jnyananath Maharaj the issue of Shree Rama temple at Ayodhya would also be solved"**.

Shri Dattoba Chavan, was the then Sarpanch, of the Dervan village Municipality. He was highly devoted to Shree Maharaj .He was fully aware of the purpose of the activities being taken up by Shree Maharaj. The Village ruffians wanted to accost Shri Dattoba Chavan alone either at Sawarde or Chiplun and beat him. But every time he escaped unhurt with a scratch by the kind grace of Shree Maharaj only.

Shri Dattoba Chavan served as a Sarpanch for a number of years.By seeing the disturbed atmosphere; he did not want to stand for fresh election.**When Shree Maharaj came to know about this decision, he called Shri Dattoba Chavan and told him” You are only our Sarpanch. Shree Akkalkot Swami Samarth will certainly get you elected as Sarpanch. Hence the plan of opposition will totally fail”**

Accordingly, the supporters of Shri Dattoba Chavan, got him elected as Surpanch, inspite of the tough opposition and they all said “ There is ban on the Trust. Many important works of the Trust are also going on speedily. Under this atmosphere, nobody else than you, would be able to continue as Sarpanch. Hence we all request you to look after the welfare of our village by remaining with the Trust”

After this occasion, Shri Dattoba Chavan said **“Shree Maharaj is all powerful to get the improbable things done. It has been done this time. Other times, Shree Maharaj, behaved like any other ordinary person”** As per the opinion of villagers from Dervan, Hadkani, Kudap, Sawarde, except for a few people including political leaders, everybody supports the Trust.

While Dattoba Chavan was the Sarpanch, there was an occasion when about fifty five families who were against the Trust,wanted the certificates from the village Municipality . Shri Dattoba Chavan informed Shree Maharaj about this for advice.**Shree Maharaj replied “It is your foremost duty as Sarpanch, to help the people, irrespective of whether he is a friend or foe. Do not neglect your duty. Do not return evil for evil.”** And all these families who had come for certificates were given the same. Then villagers remarked **“ Shree Maharaj is like this only.We are all here because of Shree Maharaj only.”**

Dr. Kolvekar , the District Surgeon of Ratnagiri and Dr. Attar, District Health Officer, had planned to hold Family Planning Camps in the Trust Compound on 25<sup>th</sup> ,26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> January 1986, promoted by Shree Sant Sitarambua Charitable Trust. It was also decided to carry out more than two hundred family planning operations.The Government was paying Rs. 115/- to the male and Rs.130/- to the female as encouragement for the operation. The Trust had decided to make the arrangement for the payment of medicinal charges, facility for meals, staying, leaving the patient at home by motor vehicles as well as Rs. 300/- per person as monetary help.

The Trust had also erected open shed for the camp. But the opposition leaders became certain that the Trust would go one step ahead if this camp becomes successful. At that time Shri Bhai Sawant was the concerned minister for health. To support Shri Govind Nikam and other opposition leaders, Dr. Kolvekar was transferred from Ratnagiri to Ulhas nagar, Maharashtra on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1986 and the family planning camp shed was destroyed completely.

**Probably whatever took place might not have been approved by Shree Akkalkot Swami Samarth, as within few days, a terrible stroke of Lentin Commission hit Shri Bhai Sawant and in that stroke, Shri Bhai Sawant died an unfortunate death.**

On a similar basis, the opposition leaders objected for the opening of a big Hospital in Dervan, by Shree Maharaj and thus the project was dropped. Trust carried out a number of improvements in Dervan and surrounding villages as humanitarian service.

1) Potable water was supplied by Tankers which completely removed old disease of guinea worms.

2) Cash employment was made available for all those who demand work. This resulted in the subsidence of the money lending business.

3) The cases of death by serpent bite and scorpion bite became rare on account of quick arrangement of transport vehicle as well as the immediate medical treatment.

4) The cases of child-death was minimum, as medical help was made available on urgent basis.

5) Cases of death of sick villagers came down, as proper advice was given to take the patient to the Hospital instead of the temple and asking for the Kaul (promise) from deity.

6) Eradication of the false custom of sacrificing cocks and goats before starting agricultural work instead of offering coconut before the Gramdevata (tutelary deity of a village)

7) Elimination of the partiality in respect of caste or creed in serving food to the guests who attend the festivals of Shree Shivaraya Jayanti (birth anniversary) or Shree sant Sitaramba Jayanti.

8) repairing of school building and supplying of notebooks, raincoats, school bags, pencils and scholarship which increased school attendance as well as the standard of education.

9) Supplying of bullocks and blankets to the needy farmers, which lowered the business of rich money-lenders.

10) Providing monetary help to parents to get their daughters married without taking loan.

11) Reduction in the tendency of the Hindu poor ladies going for manual work in Moslem homes which indirectly stopped the outrage on the ladies by house owners.

12) Repetition of the name "Shree Swami Samarth, Jaya Jaya Swami Samarth" spread in every home.

13) Liquor drinking became rare.

14) Working out the improvement in the health of ladies as well as gents. Improvement in dressing, indirectly improved facial expressions.

15) Infused fearlessness. Hindus realised that, they together, can bring achievements.

**16) Villagers started singing Bhajans (singing of Bhajan in praise of God) "Shree Swami Samarth Jaya Jaya Swami Samarth" in the praise of Akkalkot Nivasi Shree Swami Samarth and his disciple Shree Maharaj. By seeing Shree Maharaj, the villagers realised "What is true devotion", as Shree Maharaj, though Divine man, lived like an ordinary person. Though fully powerful, he never performed any miracle for public display.**

The duo Nikam-Modak made various false complaints against the Trust, to the Government Agencies like, C.I.D. (Criminal Investigation Deptt.) C.B.I. (Central Bureau of Investigation), I.B. (Intelligence Bureau), Income Tax Deptt. and even up to the level of the then Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi, stating that, the Trust had grabbed the land from the poor by cheating them, captured the Public Water resources, blocked roads etc. Questions were raised in the Legislative Assembly, with hue and cry, to set up an enquiry about the working of Trust. The enquiry cleared the Trust, the activities of Trust, as well as, the Trustees, of all the

allegations. The Trust emerged victorious from this acid test and came into limelight shining lustroously like gold. The enquiry also showed that the Trust activities are for the selfless humaniterian service only. **Everyone realised that Shree Maharaj is God in human form and worthy of reverence and veneration. The 12-year relentless struggle carried out by Shree Maharaj, by maintaining his piousness and without compromising with the opponents, finally fructified.**

The enquiry officers met all those who had sold their lands to the Trust. They enquired in depth with them regarding the sale. Each one of them replied similarly “We have willingly sold our land to the Trust, after getting very good compensation price. We are very fortunate that the Trust is utilising our land for the good cause”. On getting such straightforward replies, in clear words, the enquiry officers were fully satisfied and the investigation was kept confidential. The opponents of the Trust, pressurised the villagers, but not even a single villager fell prey to their pressure. Not even a single villager testified against the Trust. The allegations that the Trust had captured the Public Water source were totally baseless. Because even today, the borewells and public wells dug by Trust for villagers stand as a witness to Trust’s good intentions of village welfare. Thus the evil plot of the duo, Nikam-Modak, was totally exposed and they failed in their mission to defame the Trust, in Government circles.

After all these incidents also, Shri Ibrahim Modak did not change his attitude, to put the control on his activities of hooliganism. But the member of the parliament Shri Govind Nikam, his son-in-law, Dr. Chorage (Vice President of Jilla Parishad), his son, Shri Shekhar Nikam (Principal, Agricultural Collage) and shri D.N.Shembekar, the counsellor of Shri Govind Nikam, on 18<sup>th</sup> August 1991, came to Trust Temple for taking blessings of Shree Maharaj . The Trustees as well as the Trust employees observed “abhaya”(assurance of protection) as per the Principal of Eternal Vedic Religion. At that time Shree Ashokrao Joshi(The current successor of Shree Maharaj), Shri Amol Kondkar, Shri Prasad Tendulkar and Shri Aaba Rajeshirke(the manager of the Trust) were present.

**Shree Ashokrao Joshi, spoke to Shri Govind Nikam “ All the courtcases of the Trust against you, have been withdrawn. Because this, not only, is a waste of money and time of the Trust, but also, unnecessary involvement of the staff of the Trust. Hence, as per the strong desire of Shree Maharaj, it has been decided to utilise this money, time and human energy for the prosperity of Trust’s humanitarianism projects.”**

Then Shri Govind Nikam said”I was not aware of all the True facts about the Trust. I did all these things due to misapprehension”

**Shree Ashokrao Joshi, further clarified to Shri Nikam, that as per the principles and teachings of Shree Maharaj, there was no hatred, jealousy or contempt**

**against anybody**.As per the system of householder's duties the tea was served to Shri Govind Nikam and the meeting was over.The good outcome of this meeting was that Shri Govind Nikam thereafter gave up all his tactics regarding, opposing of Trust activities, in any form.

By this time , Shree Shiv Samarth Gad was nearly completed.

### The Festivals - Prior Planning And Mode of Work

All the programmes in the Temple Shrine of Shree BabaMaharaj at Pune were being preplanned, with arrangement and mode of work by ShreeMaharaj only. The list of all the programmes to be held during the year, would be prepared in the beginning of the year .The programmes are celebrated according to the' tithi'(lunar day). For the celebration of anniversary festival of the birthday of Shree BabaMaharaj, invitations are sent in advance to the devotees.For other festivals, this method is not followed.

As per the customary practice of ShreeMaharaj, all the works of the Temple shrine are to be carried out strictly as per the discipline. ShreeMaharaj always loved discipline. He never liked any violation of the discipline.Timings are fixed during day when the devotees can visit the Temple shrine for taking blessings of Shree BabaMaharaj. Except for the fixed timings, nobody is allowed entry. Shree Maharaj said" Even if my father comes, he would have to follow these rules."

During the festival celebration, the children of age less than nine years are not allowed entry. Ladies wearing nine or six yards sarees are only allowed to enter. Ladies wearing Punjabi dress (Salwar-Kurta) are not allowed to enter.Ladies wearing nine yards sarees are only allowed to wave a Aarati(lamp) around the idol,cut the fruits required for worship and prepare Veedas(roll of betel nuts). As per ShreeMaharaj,the Temple shrine of Shree BabaMaharaj is considered as a maternal home for ladies. Ladies who get their hair cut short as per the modern system are not allowed entry.Ladies are not allowed during their monthly period(monthly course of menstruation). If any emergency arises during the festival time, then the ladies are sent to the city for stay as an alternative.The gents who want to take part in the festivals,have to wear dhotee and remove shirt etc.

The rules do not permit ladies and gents to sit together and chit chat. Separate arrangements are made for females and males regarding staying,sitting etc.The gents have to wear cap compulsarily during actual programme. During meal time, the gents have to remove their shirt etc.,except in winter.The gents cannot shave the beard during the festival days till the festival is over.Long hair is also not allowed for gents.

In the Temple-shrine, the food is cooked, offered to the deity as well as served to the devotees by wearing silk dhotee(which ensures cleanliness).The worship,the ceremonial ablution and all other acts pertaining to the worship are carried out by wearing silk dhotee only.The devotees staying in the temple-shrine are not allowed to go out without the permission of Shree Maharaj, who expected every devotee to spend his valuable time in the contemplation of God at least for a minimum of two days, by remaining in Temple-shrine, away from worldly affairs. Further Shree Maharaj expressly told “Every devotee should augment his religious service by remaining in the proximity of Shree BabaMaharaj,as in the end,this religious service only would come to his rescue”

After this festival is over,the devotee leaves the Temple-shrine only after Shree Maharaj personally gives him the prasad(food offered to the idols),angara (sacred ashes of incense burnt before a deity or Sadguru), Sunthavada (ginger candy) and Shengadana (Peanut).

Every devotee enjoys in observing the discipline of the Temple-shrine.If any devotee violates the discipline, he would be taken to task in the presence of everybody by Shree Maharaj. When that concerned devotee realizes his mistake, then everything would be cooled down.In the Temple-shrine, anybody comes in or goes out, anything brought in or taken out, would not escape the notice of Shree Maharaj.

The devotees, who bring in offerings for Shree BabaMaharaj, receive some portion of that offerings as prasad except the garland and the remaining portion would be distributed as prasad amongst the devotees present in the Temple shrine. whatever comes in or brought in the Temple -shrine, would be first placed in front of Shree BabaMaharaj, then shown to Shree Maharaj and after his approval only it would be put in use. The daily newspaper and the postal letters, would be first placed in front of Shree BabaMaharaj,and after his perusal only, others can read them. As per Shree Maharaj , everything belonged to Shree BabaMaharaj only.

**Shree Maharaj was of the strong opinion that a woman should be treated with full honour and respect in the society. He never liked contempt and humiliation towards a woman. He always insisted that women, who come for work in Dervan, should wear a nine yards sarees. He always felt that a woman should look after her own house as a housewife instead of going out for job at the cost of the family. A woman should birth to a dutiful, affectionate son/daughter and provide an intelligent, capable, responsible citizen to the Nation. Chastity and fidelity can only protect a woman.**

In his speech during the prize distribution ceremony at the Temple-shrine, Pune, as well as Shree Shivaraya birth Anniversary festival at Deravn, Shree Maharaj spoke regarding women

“My mothers and sisters, my confidence lies in you. If all of you take it in your heart, you can create human gems like Shree Shivaraya who would lead our Hindustan towards golden age. If men behave in an irresponsible way, you only have to control them and save this society from total destruction. You should get offended with those people who through their advertisement carry out the obscene exhibition of your physique. Wake up and smear their faces with tar in retaliation. If nobody comes to help you, I would certainly stand behind you. But if you feel that future generation should not be henpecked then don't keep silent now. If you maintain good behaviour in your life, these children, growing up as ‘parents’ of tomorrow, would become fully accomplished.”

### Simplicity And Orderliness

As a matter of fact, the personal requirements of Shree Maharaj were limited. In that requirement, there was no pomp and show. He was normally wearing kokani chappals, dhotee, malmal shirt with a simple cotton shirt on that malmal shirt, then a coat, a cap, malmal handkerchief in one coat pocket with a spectacle's box and then a cloth piece of pancha (short dhotee) one pen, one ballpen, one pencil kept in upper left coat pocket. A small bunch of keys and a sharp edged pen-knife were kept in the outer large left coat pocket. In the inner right coat pocket, were kept a big money purse and a photo of Shree Baba Maharaj. In the inner left small coat pocket, Shree Maharaj was to keep the 'Sarp mukhi' ring and the silver ring which were worn by him on his finger. He was to put on shirt buttons, one directly under the shirt collar and second below that.

The folded strip of the shirt below the buttons was always maintained straight by Shree Maharaj, keeping in view, the frequencies of his traveling to Mumbai-Pune-Dervan. Shree Maharaj had kept a minimum of essential spare dress with him. He always took pure vegetarian food in a limited quantity only. In this simplicity, there was natural neatness and orderliness.

### Daily Routine In The Temple Shrine Of Shree Vahalkar Maharaj

Shree Maharaj, daily would get up during 4.00 a.m. to 5.00 a.m. in the morning. Everyday, in the early morning there would be Kakad Aarati (Chanting praise and at the same time waving of lamp of a coarse wick of cloth before deity) by Shri Vasant Gopal Shembekar and which was being attended by Shree Maharaj as well as Shree Sitarambua along with all devotees present in the Temple-shrine at that time.

Shree Maharaj was receiving a number of letters from devotees of far away places, all of which, he would reply without delay, by getting up between 3 a.m. to 4 a.m. in the morning. His handwriting was very beautiful and the letterwriting programme would go on for a minimum of two to three hours in a sweet language with full of blessings.

In the morning after the dawn, the workmen would come for work. The day's work would be allotted through Shree Sitarambua. A number of other people from nearby villages also were coming there for taking blessings from Shree Maharaj.

At 9.00a.m. after taking refreshments, Shree Maharaj would go for a round and cover all area of inspection. After the morning Sandhya (prayer) he would start the Pooja (worship). The idol of the deity would be decorated by flowers, leaves of holy basil, sacred leaves of bael tree and durva (sacred grass). At the completion of Pooja, milk was being offered to the deity and then the Aarati (waving of lamp before the deity) would be performed. After this, Shree Maharaj would carry out the Pooja at the shrine of Shree Digambarbaba Vahalkar. Then he would go to Tulasi Vrindavan (a raised bed for planting holy basil) situated on the front side, complete the pradakshina (walking around from left to right) of the Tulsi Vrindavan, then offer flowers and burn incense. Then he would go to the spot of the funeral rites of Shree Digambarbaba and the spot where Shree Sitarambua had installed the idol of Lord Hanuman in a little dome. Here Shree Maharaj would offer the sacred leaves of bael tree as well as flowers to Lord Hanuman, burn the incense and carry out the waving of the lamp around the idol of Lord Hanuman. Finally, Shree Maharaj would go to the Shivapindi (the phallus of Lord Shiva) installed by him only at the base of Audumber tree (glamorous fig tree), carry out the Pooja (worship) of that Shivapindi, complete a Pradakshina and then return to the Temple-shrine.

After offering food to the deities as well as at the shrine of Shree Vahalkarbua, dining leaves with meals would be kept ready for the devotees. Then the Brahmins would say the prayer Trisuparna. After this the Brahmins would be offered meals and dakshina (money given to Brahmins on religious occasion). After offering prayers to Lord Vishnu and other deities, the devotees would start taking the meals. The food would be served on the dining leaves in a particular system only. On the right side of the leaf, vegetables, left side chatni (A seasoning formed of chopped chillies etc.) Koshimber (salad), Papad (a thin crisp cake made of floor), pickles on the top of leaf, salt and lemon piece on the bottom of the leaf, VaranBhaat (pulse broth and cooked rice) and sweet in the centre would be served. This system of serving food was liked by Shree Maharaj.

Shree Maharaj while taking food, would always give due respect to the food, considering the same as Divine Lord. Before taking meals he would ascertain that the parrot, the dog and the bullock were also given their food.

Shree Maharaj always was carrying an umbrella and one bamboo stick bent at number of places, with him while taking walk in Dervan and Sawarde Villages. For cleaning hands, he was to carry one cloth piece of a short dhotee on his shoulder. The wearing of dhotee by Shree Maharaj, had its own peculiarity. There was neatness in that wearing. The small folds of the dhotee were to be of equal breadth and one by one, in a uniform manner. These folds were being done so systematically that even when Shree Maharaj gets up after sleep, there won't be any change in the folds. He would sit for hours together in the chair without moving his thigh and when he gets up, his dhotee would be found intact without any fold.

Shree Maharaj would wash his own dhotee and arrange to hang it on a rod and spread it along in the air, without leaving any folds by means of stick. He also maintained his simple bed in such a neat way that not a single fold would be found in the white bedsheet. One would get a doubt whether anybody slept on it or not.

The power of recollection of Shree Maharaj was simply remarkable. Once acquainted with any person, he would recollect that person's name anytime. Within a moment Shree Maharaj would closely examine attitude, distinguished features of one's nature, behaviour and perfection of that person. As per Shree Maharaj, a person having the right of wearing a sacred thread, should invariably wear it and maintain the same properly. Shree Maharaj always loved children who wear the sacred thread and carry on the morning, noon and evening prayers.

During the period of festival ceremonies, Shree Maharaj not only abstained from shaving his beard but also did not permit any of the devotees for the same. During festival ceremony after the Kirtan programme (narration of a topic punctuated by music) Shree Maharaj would personally distribute hard bundi laddus (sweetmeat balls composed of bundis or granules of gramflour fried with ghee and then sugar mixed) as prasad (food offered to the idols) to all the devotees.

In the afternoon, after all activities of the temple shrine were over, Shree Maharaj as well as all other inmates would take rest. Then after 4.p.m. Shree Maharaj, Shree Sitaramba along with other devotees who had come for taking blessings would go out for a walk in the garden and field. During that time, Shree Maharaj would give suggestions to Shree Sitaramba regarding works in general as well as pertaining to gardening and field.

After coming from the walk, Shree Maharaj and Shree Sitaramba would take bath, say Sandhya (evening prayer) and perform Aarati in the temple. After this Aarati in the temple, Shree Maharaj would light scented sticks at a number of places. Shree Sitaramba would offer frankincense (Dhoop). There would be Aarati before the Shrine of Digambarbaba afterwards. Then after singing Paanchpadi (metrical piece of five hymns sung by devotees before their deity), the devotees would be offered meals. In the beginning of the festival ceremonies, The

people would come from places like Pawas, Pomendi, Someshwar, Chiplun, Sawarde, Ratnagiri and Dervan.

It is evident that the anger shown towards the devotees was in fact never existing in Shree Maharaj. Further, Shree Maharaj was struggling intensely to make the devotees realise that, their welfare in this life, depended upon their performance of proper actions, carrying out one's duties selflessly, industriously and without any failures. **Shree Maharaj had an earnest longing internally for the well-being and the prosperity of all the devotees associated with him. Hence due to this earnest longing only, Shree Maharaj was concentrating in tackling the difficulties and the illfate of his devotees. Shree Maharaj was to say**

**“Love of Sadguru is the true love ! You have to ask for that love! That love is all pervading! You have to experience that by your true love only. In this true love only, you will get satisfaction and happiness. In this love of Sadguru. One's ego vanishes and nothing else will be left behind.”**

### Love towards Birds and Animals

At Pune and Shree kshetra Dervan, animals and birds have been tamed in the Temple shrine. In the Temple shrine at Pune, two parrots , one African 'Kusuku' (grey parrot) and good quality rural tamed dogs for guarding the Temple shrine. Now two cows have been maintained.

Before taking any food, Shree Maharaj would first get confirmed that these tamed birds, animals as well as servants and watchmen have been fed or not, usually and even during the festival days. When Shree Maharaj starts giving ' Prasad' of peanuts to the devotees and also when he sits for taking food, both the parrots would shout till they are fed with fruit slices by Shree Maharaj. Since the parrots liked maize corn, guava fruit and beans, Shree Maharaj arranged for growth of maize, beans , guava fruits in the garden of the Temple shrine. The maize was very much liked by the cows and bullocks.

Shree Maharaj had named the grey parrot 'kusuku' as 'Raghuveer'. When Shree Maharaj was calling kusuku by name 'Raghuver', then that parrot would answer his call by whistling in sweet tunes. Even the tamed dogs of the Temple shrine would respond to the call of Shree Maharaj and come jumping and wagging tail.

### A Distinct Shamy Dog, Devotee Of Shree Maharaj

A black hairy dog named 'Shamya' was reared by Shree Maharaj. When the worship and Aarati is over in Temple of the dwelling place, Shree Maharaj would come to the temple-shrine of Shree Baba Maharaj for worship. After the worship, he would give the milk offered to the idol, to all the devotees present in the Temple-shrine and then return to the dwelling place. At that time, 'Shamya' dog would approach him for the milk prasad. It had become the daily habit of 'Shamya' dog to insist for the prasad after the Aarati, from Shree Maharaj. Whenever Shree Maharaj washed his feet under the tapwater, 'Shamya dog' without fail would drink that water as holywater.

This way one day, after drinking that holy water, in which feet of Shree Maharaj were washed, 'Shamya' dog rested permanently, in front of the entrance of the Temple shrine of Shree Baba Maharaj. Shree Maharaj put holy Ganga water in the mouth of 'Shamya' dog, passed his hand over the body with great affection, lifted and brought it to the open shed where the dog breathed its last. Then Shree Maharaj got one pit ready in the garden itself and buried 'Shamya' in that pit, covered by holy basil, camphor and leaves of bael-tree. Thus Shree Maharaj allowed 'Shamya' dog to remain always in the close Divine Proximity.

### Ability To Do And Undo.

With a pure intention of rendering devotional service at the feet of his Sadguru and augmenting the magnificence and splendour of his Sadguru as well as that of the Temple shrine, Shree Maharaj continuously exerted himself and raised two unparalleled places of pilgrimage. Shree Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe Samadhi Mandir (Temple shrine) at Pune and other Shree Kshetra Dervan with Shree Shiv Samarth Gad. In these two holy places, very important, unconceivable and beyond imagination religious ceremonies and a number of sacrifices have been performed for the welfare of this entire world.

**Shree Maharaj was to say "I am only a servant here. As per Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj, one should live a life which is smaller than the smallest, even smaller than an atom. Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj is a doer and also makes one do. On July 24<sup>th</sup> 1953, Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj has accepted everything belonging to me including my ego. From that day, Vitthal Ganesh Joshi got merged in the person of Shree Saguru Baba Maharaj. Now whatever you are seeing is simply my corpse in front of you. It is only a machine now. Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj is the owner guardian as well as the conductor of this machine"**

Shree Maharaj did not approve of people who talk more about the Vedanta (theological part of the Vedas) but fail to follow the principles. Hence he was to hide his generous mindedness, tenderness of his heart and softness with great restraint from the public. The

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examples and the definition of wiseman given in the Dnyaneshwari, by the Saint Dnyaneshwar Maharaj match that of Shree Maharaj every aspect.

Shree Maharaj has favoured innumerable people, the count of which is impossible to maintain. But it is rather strange that not a single reference was either made or quoted anywhere by Shree Maharaj. Shree Maharaj means the ultimate limits of straightforwardness and outspokenness. He would never talk just in favour of somebody or please somebody. At the same time, he would take notice of even the smallest merit of a person with due regard. This also he did for the augmentation of the good ethics, good deeds and virtuous conduct amongst the people. He always would restrict within himself the qualities like restraint and rigorous exactness. One would observe the limitless generosity regarding charitable acts as well as religious rites. These good qualities were excellently developing and prospering in Shree Maharaj.

### His Generosity.

The generosity of Shree Maharaj knew no bounds. He gave in charity without limit, food and cloth to the needy people. During festivals all the devotees were blessed with prasad (food offered to the deity) and cloth depending upon their need like, dhotee, trousers (Pyajama), long robe as well as nine yards sarees to lady devotees without making distinction amongst the devotees.

During winter, the devotees were given woollen clothes like, cap, sweater, muffler and blanket. Sometimes Shree Maharaj was to give money also as prasad to the devotees. Shree Maharaj would say "Oh! What else can be there with me? I am a fakir (a pauper)! Whatever Sadguru (Shree Baba Maharaj) gives to me, the same will be given to you." By the blessings of Shree Maharaj some devotees got settled in life, some got their shelters arranged, some got houses, some got the experience of rebirth, some with success and prosperity, some got rid of their poverty and illfate, some got cured of their diseases and health restored, some got escaped from death or sudden death, some got their marriages settled, some got directed on the path of virtue from wrong path. Thus without getting involved individually in the affairs of this mundane world, Shree Maharaj looked after the welfare of this whole world.

The life style of Shree Maharaj was simple. His daily wear was dhotee, shirt, coat, cap all made of cotton only and umbrella with bamboo handle. For drying hands and feet, he was using a simple cotton short dhotee (Pancha)

He would drink the same tea, eat the same food and breakfast prepared for the devotees. Not only this, he did not allow his seat to be higher than others. ***He would say “VIP(very important person) treatment is only meant for God and Shree Baba Maharaj! There should not be any compromise” He remained aloof from any type of publicity. Averseness to publicity was his distinguishing feature. He would always say “ I have not done anything . Everything is done by Sadguru Baba Maharaj only. Everything takes place as per his wish.***

**As per the prayer of Shree Maharaj only, his total ego alongwith everything belonged to him in person, was accepted by Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. Shree Maharaj had lost all the interest in his independent existence. But he continued his existence in this mundane world for the welfare of the people only.**

### Implicit Faith In The Vedas.

Shree Maharaj had implicit faith in the Vedas(sacred scriptures of Hindus). He strongly desired for the augmentation of the study of Vedas. He had a great reverence regarding people who study Vedas. Hence he used to bow before a person who had learnt Vedas by heart. He would consider one who follows strictly the principles of Vedas, as Godly person. Shree Maharaj always treated with great respect the Brahmin versed in Vedas as well as a learned man who has studied Shastras(scriptures). On account of implicit faith of Shree Maharaj in the Vedas, one centre for the studies of Vedas has been opened under the guidance of VedMurthy(An honourable compellation used in letters before the name of a learned Brahmin), Kinjavadekar Guruji, in the temple shrine of Shree Baba Maharaj at Pune. Later on, in the same Muth another centre for imparting sacrificial studies has also been opened under the guidance of VedMurthy Laxman Shastri Sapre.

In fact Shree Maharaj had planned for opening two more centres at Pune, one for the study of Sanskrit Language alongwith Sanskrit Literature and another for Ayurvedic Medical Treatment.

### Pride Of Vedic Aryan Religion

Shree Maharaj was having the burning pride of the Eternal Aryan Religion of Vedas, which is being represented by a red-ochre ensign(flag)fluttering in the temple-shrine of Shree Baba Maharaj for all the twelve months. To keep this flag in good condition it is being replaced by a new one three to four times in a year , during festival time after performing the ritual worship of the flag before hoisting. Shree Maharaj has written a prayer for flag-salutation in

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Sanskrit language, which is being offered before flag hoisting. This prayer reflects the burning patriotism and love of Shree Maharaj for this country. **Shree Maharaj had an earnest longing that our country, Hindustan, should lead this world as a religious preceptor.**

**Shree Maharaj expected that this country should prosper and reach the pinnacle of power and to prove that this country could lead the world as a religious preceptor. Shree Maharaj prayed Shree Baba Maharaj to take rebirth on priority. Then he said “Merely by material prosperity this country cannot achieve greatness. Only the spiritual foundation would lead this country towards its destiny as well as prosperity.”**

Shree Maharaj had a great anxiety as to how the welfare of the Hindu Society could be carried out. He strongly felt that this society should organise itself so that its consolidated energy power would shine like a sun continuously. Hence he wished that all people should come together by way of devotion to God and worship their energy power by forgetting their differences.

Even then, the different systems of religious service had created a diversity of sentiments amongst people of various religious sects. Because of the false pride, the misunderstanding amongst the people had simply got aggravated. To clear all this misunderstanding amongst the people of different religious sects, Shree Maharaj arranged for a get-together of the people of different religious sentiments in the temple-shrine of Shree Baba Maharaj at Pune. **He also raised Shree Shivasamarth Temple at Dervan and made a beginning in bringing together the people of different religious sects on the occasion of Shiva Jayanti (celebration of the birth anniversary of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj)**

**For generations to generations and centuries to centuries, to inspire people regarding patriotism, to express greatfulness of Hindu society towards Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, to impress on common public, the greatness of the sacrifice of self-interest and prefer to die in one's own Religion than accepting the other Religion, to convince common public that the virtuous conduct with selfless sacrifice, the only way of uplifting the self as well as the people, Shree Maharaj raised Shivrushi and Shree Shivasamarth Temple at Shree Kshetra Dervan.**

**Shree Maharaj wished earnestly that, this Hindu society as well as the Hindu Nation which had crumbled down in the pit of pleasure and enjoyment, shaken by the selfishness, caught in the boggy of corruption, entangled in the close embrace of addiction, swallowed up and hollowed due to immorality, resulting in the loss of self-respect, vanity and virtue, should regain the glory and power. Shree Maharaj raised Shree Shivasamarth Gad so that when the younger generation come near this Gad, they would get mentally**

**prepared and carry with them the love for Hindu Nation which would make them very strong like steel.**

Shree Maharaj also anticipated that the life boat of Hindu samaj, which had lost its way, would get the right direction. The pride lost would get restored . Shree Maharaj also anticipated that there would be a growth in the worship of virtue as well as good manners and further, the younger generation would experience the unadulterated happiness from the sacrifice of selfless karmayoga (The path of God realisation by dedicating the fruits of one's work to God.)

### **Fruitless Income Tax Raid**

Literally from nothing, Shree Maharaj created the temple-shrine of Shree Baba Maharaj at Pune and the temple-shrine of Shree Sant Sitarambua as well as Shiva-Shrushti, at Dervan. Further he had made arrangements so that all the religious rites as well as the divine activities being performed regularly without any break, in the temple-shrines.

He carried out all these activities with the sole intention of providing opportunities for the welfare of the society . In this work, very often , Shree Maharaj had to face the opposition, then fight with opponents and attend the courts. Everywhere the opponents, because of their selfishness created a number of obstructions in the path of Shree Maharaj.

Some devotees who came in the close association of Shree Maharaj enjoyed the maximum benefit from the closeness of Shree Maharaj but ultimately some of them went against him and even tried to wipe out the existence of Shree Maharaj. Out of these devotees, one person, in spite of getting the maximum financial prosperity by the kind grace of Shree Maharaj, remained unhappy on account of his false ego, made a complaint to the Income Tax Department, that the temple-shrines were in the possession of huge amount of unaccounted money. This complaint resulted in the Income Tax raids in the temple-shrines at Pune, Dervan as well as in the house of Shri Walawalkar, at Bombay.

In fact, due to his second sight (power of internal vision by which future and distant occurrences are presented), Shree Maharaj purposefully had brought seventeen lakhs of rupees from the bank and kept in the temple-shrine at Pune. The Income Tax Department did not find anything unaccounted in the temple-shrine at Dervan or in the house of Shri Walawalkar at Mumbai. But the Income Tax Department got seventeen lakhs of rupees at the temple-shrine Pune. This news was published in the papers at that time. The case went on for nearly two years. After thorough investigation, it was proved that this amount of seventeen lakhs was fully

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accounted for and this complete amount was returned by a cheque without any fine to the temple-shrine,Pune.

### **Was this not a miracle of Shree Maharaj!**

#### **Peculiar Disposition**

As per the word of Shree Maharaj, his original constitution, as well as his temperament was very passionate but it had no touch of malice and jealousy. He had a strange annoyance towards injustice. He would never tolerate any sudden blow to his self-respect. He always had a tendency to do anything as per his own will only.

The personality of Shree Maharaj was adorned by various skills and fine arts,like carpentry, smithy(ironsmith), painting,handicraft, music and even acting in a drama. Moreover he had a liking for poetry by birth.He would get inspiration of metrical poetry which naturally occur to his mind since birth. He had a bent of mind to think deeply about everything and even search for the very best out of the best things. Shree Maharaj personally was unselfish. He never expected anything from anybody. He also never accepted service from anybody without any remuneration.Speaking plain and unreserved to the point logically was the distinguishing feature of Shree Maharaj. He never evaded the time given by him. He cored discipline and cleanliness.The word of Shree Maharaj was treated as the word of Lord Rama. It never got changed or wasted.

Self dependence was the individual nature of Shree Maharaj. He taught the villagers of Konkan area, as to how their self-dependence helps them to get different varieties of vegetables like, cabbage. Cauliflower, Navalkol(a sort of vegetable), tomato, gram, maize and watermelon in addition to the regular crops.

Shree Maharaj loved animals and birds, like parrot,peacock.cow , bullock and dog. At present, parrots are reared in the temple-shrine at Pune. Special mention can be made here regarding 'Shamya' dog at the temple-shrine at Pune, who used to drink the water made holy by washing the feet of Shree Maharaj. Not only that, this 'Shamya' dog, after its death was buried in the ground of temple-shrine only.

Shree Maharaj expected that the devotees and the disciples should carry out the works as well as religious duties properly and quickly. He always respected elderly people. He honoured the Brahmins who studied Vedas(religious scriptures).

Everybody knows the philanthropic nature of Shree Maharaj from young age. He always gave whatever available with him, to a needy person irrespective of that person's caste, creed or even religion.

The patriotism of Shree Maharaj was very intense. He had a very great longing for the freedom of our country. Lokmanya Tilak and the great freedom fighter Shree V.D. Sawarkar were his deities. He was following the Swadeshi Vrata (A vow to use articles made in one's own country) with devotedness. A number of people had seen Shree Maharaj wearing khadi dress (khadder cloth) from top to toe. He had established great personages like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Shree samarth Ramdas Swamy in his heart and he was to carry out hero-worship of these personages. He had a burning pride for being a Hindu. Shree Maharaj had anticipated that this Hindu Society though in majority in this country but found scattered, now should come together, organize themselves, follow one's religion, become strong as well as powerful and get one's problems solved by one's own ability. Shree Maharaj did not approve of any compromise regarding the observance of one's own religion. **As per the words of Shree Maharaj, the eternal Aryan Religion of Vedas (Hindu scriptures) only could protect and look after the mankind of this world. Shree Maharaj tried his best to enable this Hindu country to lead the world as a religious preceptor.**

### Pilgrimages & Meeting With Saints

**Gagan Gad**—When Shree Maharaj started from Ratnagiri for Mumbai by walking, he came to Gagangad at Khopoli, Maharashtra (On the way from Mumbai to Pune) and met Shree Gagangiri Maharaj and stayed there for few days. Again during the year 1966, Shree Maharaj met Shree Gagangiri Maharaj for the second time, along with Shri Dinanath Banavali, Shri Raghunath Prabhudesai and Shri Navalkar. At that time, Shree Gagangiri Maharaj was sitting under water and doing penance. When Shree Maharaj came to know this, he removed his coat, shirt, cap etc and jumped into the water. After some time, Shree Maharaj came out of the water with two Padukas (two stone impressions of a foot). He gave these Padukas to Shree Gagangiri Maharaj and said "These are the Padukas of Lord Dattatreya". Shree Gagangiri Maharaj installed these stone Padukas at the foot of the Audumber tree (glomorous fig tree) in Khopoli.

**Shree Maharaj completed the pilgrimage to the holy places Ganagapur, Akkalkot, Pandharpur and Phaltan along with Shri Dinanath Banavali only.**

**Ganagapur**— Shree Vishweshwar Aiyya Maharaj was the Sadguru of Shri Banavali. Shri Banavali stated "My Sadguru Shree Vishweshwar Aiyya Maharaj had made over myself to

Shree Maharaj with instructions to follow the orders of Shree Maharaj”. Sadguru Shree Vishweshwar Aiyya Maharaj was staying at Ganagapur (Gulbarga District, Karnataka state). Shri Banavali further stated “During the year 1958, in the intercalary month of Shravan(The fifth month as per Hindu Calender and July or August as per the English Calender), Sadguru Shree Vishweshwar Aiyya Maharaj had performed “Shree Vishnu Yag”(Sacrifice for propitiating Lord Vishnu) and for this sacrifice, Shree Maharaj was invited. But due to prearranged programmes, Shree Maharaj could not go to Ganagapur to attend this function. After this sacrifice was over, Shri Banavali who attended the function, left Ganagapur for Mumbai. Before leaving Ganagapur, Shri Banavali was given one coconut by Sadguru Shree Vishweshwar Aiyya Maharaj, with instructions to hand it over to Shree Maharaj with a request to visit Ganagapur”.

Shri Banavali handed over this coconut to Shree Maharaj requesting him to visit Ganagapur. But Shree Maharaj could not go. On November 3, 1958 Sadguru Shree Vishweshwar Aiyya Maharaj left this mortal world.

During 1965, again there was intercalary month of Shravan and Shree Maharaj visited Ganagapur along with Shri Banavali to keep up his word given to Sadguru Shree Vishweshwar Aiyya Maharaj and made a halt in the hermitage of Sadguru Shree Vishweshwar Aiyya Maharaj. Next day early morning after finishing the worship in the temple as well as at the confluence, Shree Maharaj went to the Papavinashi Teerh (the holy water which destroys the sin) took bath in the holy water, as well as the blessings of the Padukas(footprints of Lord Dattatreya). *At that moment, one eagle bird came and sat before Shree Maharaj. (This eagle bird was none other than Sadguru Shree Vishweshwar Aiyya Maharaj only). Shree Maharaj and the eagle bird were looking at each other with fixed eyes. After some time, that eagle bird flew away.*

In the evening there was Aarati(ceremony of waving a burning lamp around the idol) as well as palanquin ceremony in the temple. When Shree Maharaj was standing in the adytum(innermost part) of the temple during the ‘Aarati’ ceremony, *a Miracle took place. Around the feet of Shree Maharaj, the sacred river Ganga (river Ganges) had descended. The sacred water of river Ganga had collected there at the feet of Shree Maharaj. The devotees present in the temple were very much surprised to see this Miracle.* After the Aarati, the palanquin ceremony took place. In this ceremony, there was a narration of a topic by Shree Maharaj nearly for one hour forty five minutes. Shree Maharaj was in a happy mood. That happiness was simply indescribable. Next day Shree Maharaj and Shri Banavali left for Akkolkot.”

### **Akkalkot---**

From Ganagapur, Shree Maharaj along with Shri Banavali, came to Akkalkot(Solapur District Maharashtra). Next day Shree Maharaj performed Laghurudra on the Samadhi(Shrine) of

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Shree Swami Samarth, offered flowers and then rested his head on that Samadhi. ***A miracle took place. The Samadhi stirred violently. This was witnessed by Shri Banavali.*** Then Shree Maharaj went to Sholapur(Maharashtra) and took the blessings of Shree Siddheshwar .Next day he proceeded to Pandharpur(Solapur Dist.Maharashtra) alongwith Shri Banavali.

### **Pandharpur---**

At Pandharpur Shree Maharaj bathed in river Chandrabhaga and then took the blessings of Shree Pandharinath(Lord Vithoba). Then he proceeded to Phaltan(Satara District, Maharashtra) along with Shri Banavali.

### **Phaltan--**

At Phaltan, Shree Maharaj met Shree Upalekar Maharaj. Since Shree Maharaj and Shree Upalekar Maharaj were knowing each other since birth, both embraced each other vehemently. It appeared as though, it was a meeting of two oceans, splashing up waves of happiness and pure love. Then after taking the Prasad (food offered to the deity) from Shree Upalekar Maharaj as well as the blessings from the shrine of his sadguru, Shree Maharaj proceeded to Velapur(Maharashtra) along with Shri Banavali.

### **Velapur---**

Shree Maharaj met the saint Shree Kaka Karkhanis who was staying alone and not keeping good health. Then he proceeded to the holy place Jejuri (Pune District,Maharashtra) along with Shri Banavali. The devotees Shri Kamble and shri Risbud were also with them right from Solapur.

### **Jejuri---**

Shree Maharaj alongwith Shri Banavali, Shri Kamble and Shri Risbud went up the hill to get the blessings of Lord Malhari Martand (Lord Shiva). After taking the blessings, Shree Maharaj went inside the adytum(innermost part) of the temple and placed his umbrella touching the idol of Lord Malhari Martand and said “Banavali, hold this umbrella” when Shri Banavali touched that umbrella a miracle took place!. **Shri Banavali could see the real Divine vision of Lord Malhari Martand with his eyes. When this miracle was taking place, the rich treasure of the turmeric powder kept as Prasad(offered to deity) in the adytum, was automatically thrown out every- where in the adytum. The person doing this act of throwing out the**

**turmeric powder was not visible but the dress of everybody became yellowish with turmeric powder. This way, Lord Malhari Martand blessed everyone of us.**

Then by the time, we got down the hill, it was evening. Shree Maharaj said “Let us go to Saswad and pay our obeisance to Shree Sopandeo Maharaj”

### **Saswad—**

After reaching the temple of Sopandeo at Saswad(Pune District, Maharashtra), Shree Maharaj along with Shri Banavali went to the river for washing the hands and feet. By that time it had become dark and while returning to the temple, we lost the way. At that instance, an old man with a lantern came there and asked “My friends, where exactly do you want to go?”

Shree Maharaj answered” we want to go to the temple” The old man said” Oh! I see, you come with me. I will take you to the temple”. So saying, the old man with the lantern accompanied us upto the temple. **When we went inside the temple, Shri Banavali turned back to thank that old man but that old man had disappeared. Shree Maharaj disclosed that the old man was nobody else than Shree Sopandeo Maharaj himself who had come to show the way.**

Shri Banavali regretted when he came to know the truth. Shree Maharaj said” Saints always shower the blessings on devotees without any expectations. Now pay your obeisance to Shree Sopandeo Maharaj by reposing your head on his padukas(feet) and praying”. After taking the blessings of Shree Sopandeo Maharaj, all returned to the temple shrine of Shree Baba Maharaj at Pune.

### **Indore---**

During the year 1970, Shree Maharaj alongwith his devotees Shri Banavali, Shri Kamlakar

Walawalkar, Shri Vasant Rao Pandit and Shri Madhav Rao Moghe, proceeded to the holy place Indore, Madhya Pradesh, to meet Shri Mukund Rao Moghe, who was a disciple of sadguru Shree Beedkar Maharaj and a fully accomplished person. Shree Maharaj said “ Let us meet Shri Moghe as his time has come for the departure from this world”

After meeting Shri Moghe, all proceeded to Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, to visit Shree Mahakaleshwar (Lord Shiva) Temple. After taking the blessings, all returned to Indore. At

Indore Shree Maharaj again went to meet Shri Moghekaka. This time Shree Maharaj and the other devotees with him were shown full hospitality, as Shri Moghekaka viewed Shree Maharaj in the form of his Sadguru Shree Beedkar Maharaj. This meeting was permanently remembered and all were very happy.

Then as per the advice of Shri Moghekaka, Shree Maharaj along with the devotees Shri Banavali, Shri Walawalkar, Shri Pandit and Shri Madhavrao Moghe, proceeded to the holy place Shree Sairam Temple at Khedighat, took the blessings and came out. **At that instant, an old lady came in front of Shree Maharaj, placed her head on his feet and took the blessings with great joy and pure sentiment. On further enquiry, the old lady stated “During my childhood, I was blessed by the same Shree Maharaj while he was completing circumambulation of the Narmada river in his past life. Today Shree Beedkar Maharaj gave me a visionary insight predicting his return and further told me to take his blessings. I am extremely fortunate to have the blessings of Shree Beedkar of past life as well as Shree Maharaj of this life“. on hearing these words, Shree Maharaj said “I am not Shree Beedkar Maharaj. Don’t be under this delusion” In fact Shree Maharaj wished that this truth about his identity should not be known to all. Then Shree Maharaj took the blessings from” Shree Onkareshwar” (Lord Shiva) and returned to Indore.**

From Indore, Shree Maharaj proceeded to Baroda via Dahod and met Shri Madhu Kale. As per the request of Shri Kale, Shree Maharaj proceeded to Dakore to take blessings of Lord Krishna. **It was a miracle that when Shree Maharaj was taking blessings of Lord Krishna, all the four devotees could see Shree Maharaj in the idol of Lord Krishna. That joy was simply indescribable for everybody.** Then Shree Maharaj returned to Baroda and next day proceeded to Mumbai. **At the holy place of Vajreshwari –Ganeshpuri Shree Maharaj took blessings of Shree Nityanand swami. Again there was a miracle, when Shree Maharaj was standing before the Samadhi (shrine) of Shree Nityanand Swami to pay his obeisance the idol of Shree Nityanand Swami opened its eyes and showered blessings on everybody.** Then Shree Mahaaj returned to Mumbai with his devotees.

## **Mathura**

During the year 1974, Shree Maharaj made a halt at the holy place Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, on the way to Haridwar, along with 10-12 devotees from Mumbai, including Shri Banavali, Shri Kamalakar Walawalkar, Shri Vasant Tikekar, Shri Sharad Muni, Shri Vasant Pandit and Shri Sapre Guruji from Pune. All the devotees were very happy to see the birth place of Lord Krishna as all got blessed by the very sight of that birth place. From there, Shree Maharaj went to Govardhan mountain and then to Vrindavan, where Lord Krishna was playing ‘rasakrida (circular dance) with Gopikas (wives of cowherds). At the very spot, all devotees along with Shree Maharaj played that circular dance to their full satisfaction.

From Mathura, Shree Maharaj alongwith the devotees proceeded to Haridwar, Uttarpradesh, to attend Kumbhamela( A religious and spiritual fair held every 12 years. This fair attracts saints and yogis as well as the general public. This is the world's largest congregation). Because of the immense crowd of people collected here, Shree Maharaj with the devotees proceeded to the hermitage, "Muni ki Reti" of Shree Shivanand Maharaj at Rushikesh, which is nearby to Haridwar, and made a halt there. Shree Swami Premanand who was the successor of Shivanand Maharaj, made all arrangements for the stay of Shree Maharaj as well as his devotees in the hall of the hermitage. Night time, Shree Maharaj was sleeping near bathroom and toilet whereas Shri Banavali was also sleeping by the side of him.

*At about midnight , Shree Maharaj woke up to go to the bathroom and woke up Shri Banavali also and told him to show the torch without putting on the light. Then Shree Maharaj washed hands and feet and after wiping the same, sat on his bed. Shri Banavali also sat on his bed. All the rest of the devotees were sleeping. **There was a miracle. A lustrous light flame came in front of Shree Maharaj and out of this flame, manifested Shree Shivanand Maharaj. A conversation took place between Shree Maharaj and Shree Shivanand Maharaj. Shri Banavali was able to see their gestures but could not speak or make any movement. He was benumbed sitting like a stone and simply watching. After a short duration, Shree Shivanand Maharaj returned unexpectedly in the same manner he had come. Shri Banavali regained consciousness only when Shree Maharaj called at him "Banavali in 1961, I had promised to Shree Shivanand Maharaji that I would come to see him. I could get this promise kept up by the kind grace of Shree Baba Maharaj today! Is this not true?" It was true only. The play of Shree Maharaj was simply imcomprehensible.***

Next day morning Shri Banavali informed other devotees regarding the miracle which took place the previous night. Everybody was very very happy to hear about this miracle. After this, all took bath in the Ganga river (river Ganges) in front of the hermitage and Vedmurthy Sapre Guruji completed the religious rites to enable all the devotees for completing the formalities of Kumbhamela bath. After taking bath , all went to the temple of Lord Vishwanath (Lord Shiva), took the blessings and then returned to Haridwar. When the devotees went for the collection of holy water from river Ganga, Shree Maharaj had been to take the blessings of Shree Gorakhanath. After collection of holy water, all proceeded to Delhi via Meerut. Next day Shree Maharaj returned to Mumbai alongwith the devotees , from Delhi.

### **Vrindavan—Meeting with Anandmayi Maa**

In the year 1984 March, Shree Maharaj went to the holy place Vrindavan, Mathura District, Uttar Pradesh, to meet the Saint Anandmayi Maa, alongwith Shri Kamalakar Walawalkar, Shri Banavali and Shri V.N. Tikekar. The main disciple of Anandmayi Maa, Shri

Bhaskaranand welcomed Shree Maharaj in the hermitage and took him to Anandmai Maa immediately. She was respecting Shree Maharaj as 'Baba'.

Shree Mharaj honoured 'Maa' with different types of fruits, flowers. Sweet, white silk saree and one excellent shawl. He placed one apple in her hand with words "For you only" She kept this apple separately for her only.

Anandmayi Maa was ill and looking very weak. There was difficulty for her to stand even with some support. Since she had so much respect and honour for Shree Maharaj, she stood up in spite of her poor health and welcomed him. The meeting between them was simply inexpressible and indescribable. **Shree Maharaj said "You are Goddess Kalimata in person! Your existence is not limited to this body only! You are present in the alive and lifeless things! You are present everywhere! Everyone is to be uplifted. Hindu religion is to be established! If required for this Hindu Nation, everyone of us would take birth after birth. For that we are all ready."**

Shree Maharaj said further to Anandmayi Maa "You would have to convey a message of my Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj to Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, since she is your devotee" Then Anandmayi Maa told her disciple Shri Bhaskaranand to arrange for a meeting with Smt. Indira Gandhi.

*By coincidence that day, there was a festival of the birth anniversary of the Saint Shree Gaurang Prabhu in the hermitage. Hence Shree Maharaj expressed his desire to take the blessings of Thakurji (Lord Krishna), but the disciples of Maa said "The bhog (food) is still to be offered to Thakurji (In North India, there is a tradition of closing the doors of the adytum while offering food to the deity). When Anandmayi Maa heard this, she immediately said "Thakurji (Krishna) himself in person has come here! Open the curtain." The curtain was opened immediately and all could see Thakurji and take the blessings.*

Above incidence shows the reverence and honour of utmost limit which Anandmayi Maa had for Shree Maharaj. A number of times, she had exclaimed "Baba! Baba! Like Ganga Maa (River Ganges) without asking, you came to my house and blessed me!" Then Shree Maharaj along with the devotees, returned to Mumbai via Delhi.

In Pune, there is also an Ashram (hermitage) of Anandmayi Maa. Once Shree Maharaj along with his devotees, had been to this Ashram to meet Anandmayi Maa. Shree Ashokrao Joshi, the disciple of Shree Maharaj (Shree Kaka Maharaj, the present successor of Shree Maharaj) who was present at that time, recalls about that meeting. "It was about 11.30 AM to 12.00 AM. Because of old age, Maa had become very weak in health. Most of the time, she would be found lying on the bed and resting. But when she came to know about the visit of Shree Maharaj to her Ashram, she got up with the help of her devotees and sat on the bed. She said "Thakurji (Lord Krishna) has come here in person!" Then after the meeting, she gave apples as prasad (food offered to the idol) to all of us. When Shree Maharaj started for returning from

the Ashram, Maa stood up with the help of devotees and said “ In reality, I should prostrate before you. But because of ill health, by standing only I offer my salutations to you “ so saying she bowed her head to Shree Maharaj.

After a few days, when Shree Maharaj had been to Mumbai, he learnt about Anandmayi Maa putting up temporarily at Santacruz, in the house of Dr. Shah an eye specialist. The sister of Dr. Shah was a disciple of Maa and a fully realised person. Dr. Shah used to come to Shree Maharaj for blessings. When Shree Maharaj came to meet Maa, she was resting on a seat and there was another seat in front of her where only coconuts were kept. **When Shree Maharaj came there she got cleared the coconuts from that seat and requested Shree Maharaj to honour that seat. She said “ As I did not want anybody else to honour that seat, I had placed coconuts on that seat. Now I request you to honour that.”**

Again Shree Maharaj discussed about her meeting with Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India. Shree Maharaj spoke “It is the wish of God. Smt. Gandhi will certainly come to meet Maa. You convey the message of my sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj to Smt. Gandhi, without fail.” While returning from there on the insistence of Maa, Shree Maharaj from the raised seat specially made for him, showered his blessings on the all devotees of Maa, gathered outside. This meeting gives an indication of the extent of honour, Anandmayi Maa had for Shree Maharaj.

### **Shree Rambaba-**

He was a disciple of Shree Saibaba. He was a fully realised saint. Even his disciples were not knowing the details about Shree Rambaba such as, his original name, original place, address or his mother tongue etc! He was not allowing anybody else other than his disciples to bow down and touch his feet for paying the obeisance. But only when he came to meet Shree Maharaj, at the temple shrine Pune, Shree Rambaba made an exception and allowed the devotees of Shree Maharaj to bow down and touch his feet for paying obeisance.

### **Anandashram Swami—**

Shree Anandashram Swami was an ascetic belonging to the Chitrapur Saraswat Tradition from Karnatak. It was said that Shree Anandashram Swami was the incarnation of the saint Shree Ramakrishna Paramhansa! But in this life he was following the religious doctrine as well as continuing the tradition of regular disciple succession of Chitra Muth (temple shrine)

There was a deep relation of Shree Maharaj with Shree Anandashram Swami as well as Chitrapur Sarswat Tradition since preceding birth. In this respect Shree Ashokrao Joshi (Shree Kaka Maharaj, the present successor of Shree Maharaj) states, “ During the year 1984, Shree Maharaj had sent Shree Ashokrao Joshi and Shri Bajirao Tikekar, purposefully to Mallapur, Karnatak. **At that time Shree Maharaj spoke “ The samadhi (shrine) of second Shankarashram Swami existing at Mallapur is my samadhi only of my past birth. I was there in the past life.” This period was roughly during the year 1780-1795. In that past birth, the second Shankarashram Swami, the present Shree Maharaj was very fiery, well-disciplined and outspoken. His relation with other Swami’s (Ascetics) was not cordial. Hence the second Shankarashram Swami alone came to Mallapur.**

The samadhi (shrine) of first Shankarashram Swami is at Gokarn, North Kanara, Karnatak. The samadhis (shrines) of disciples as well as similar seven-eight saints of the first Shankarashram Swami are existing at Shirali Muth, Chitrapur, Karnatak.

The samadhi (shrine) of second Shankarashram Swami at Mallapur is a magnificent temple, in which the idols of Rampanchayatana (idols of Rama, Laxman, Sita, Bharat, Shatrughna and Maruti) are installed. In this temple, solemn worship (a great worship done with form and ceremony) is being performed daily from 6.00 AM upto 2.00PM. The wearing of a wet silk dhotee during worshipping is rigidly followed. If a small mistake is made in this procedure, one has to undergo punishment.

**After returning from Mallapura, Shree Ashokrao Joshi(Shree Kaka Maharaj) one day, spoke to Shree Maharaj “Shall we go to Mallapur again?The temple needs some repairs, let us go and carry out those repairs!”. Then Shree Maharaj spoke “Mallapur is my favourite village. If I go there, I would not return here but I would again take my samadhi (the last conscious communion with God) there only”.**

Such was the eminence of this Chitrapur Saraswat traditional Muth, the head of which, Shree Anandashram Swami had great reverence towards sadguru Shree BabaMaharaj as well as Shree Maharaj. In this context, Shri Banavali stated his recollection “ When Shree Anandashram Swami came to the temple shrine (muth) at Pune, he paid obeisance to Shree Babamaharaj and Shree Maharaj by joining both hands,instead of the ascetic tradition. Shree Maharaj honoured him in a function and accepted the same with great joy. This was the period during the year 1958 to 1960.But the Saraswat Brahmin community of Pune, did not approve this”.Shri Banavali stated further“ **Shree Maharaj had a connection with this Chitrapur Saraswat Tradition since previous birth. During this function, Shree Maharaj was speaking in a steady Konkani language with Shree Anandashram Swami. Even he was speaking in Konkani with shri Maraballi, Shri Nagarhalli, who belong to Saraswat community. This clearly shows that Shree Maharaj had a connection with Chitrapur Sarswat Tradition since previous birth”.**

### **Shree Kaka Karkhanis—**

Shree sant Kaka Karkhanis was a disciple of Shree Gajanan Maharaj Gupte. He was staying at Velapur, Maharashtra, in a small hut built by him.The health of Shree Kaka Karkhanis was very delicate. Whenever he becomes sick, Shree Maharaj was to bring him to the temple shrine, at Pune, for medical treatment.

Shree Kaka Karkhanis stated about his visionary dream, regarding Shree Maharaj “Once he (Shree Kaka Karkhanis) was seriously ill. It was a new moon day(Amavasya). There was complete darkness in the hut as well as the surrounding. By lying on the bed with eyes closed he started meditation. In his dream he got a vision that Shree Maharaj personally came there from the cellar with a lantern. Then Shree Maharaj looked at Shree Kaka Karkhanis, placed the lantern near his pillow and went away from the cellar without speaking a word. Even Shree

Kaka Karkhanis did not speak a single word. When he woke up from his dream, he did not find the lantern or Shree Maharaj.”

It was to respect the strong will power of Shree Kaka Karkhanis that Shree Maharaj had come to Velapur to bless him in his visionary dream, inspite of the illness. The lustre left by Shree Maharaj in the room gave him the company for three days.

### **Shree Eknath Maharaj of Bhivandi--**

Shree Eknath Maharaj also known as Shree Shantarambhau Jayawant was a renowned saint of Bhiwandi, Thane district, Maharashtra. Six months before Shree Eknath Maharaj left this mortal world, Shree Maharaj had been to Bhivandi to meet him. Shree Maharaj had an old friendship with him. When they both met, they embraced each other firmly with great joy which made them to cry shedding tears of joy. Shree Eknath Maharaj always used to address Shree Maharaj as Gopal Krishna(Lord Krishna). Five to six months after this incidence, Shree Eknath Maharaj left this mortal world.

### **Goddess Shree Mahakali of Adivare –**

Shree Maharaj along with Shri Kamalakar Walawalkar and his wife( Smt. Malutai) had been to Adivare Konkan, Maharashtra, to take the blessings of Goddess Mahakali. This temple is very ancient and well known. The idol of Goddess Mahakali is very beautiful. *When Shree Maharaj, Shri Walawalkar and Smt. Malutai Walawalkar were standing before the idol for taking the blessings, there was a miracle. Smt. Walawalkar witnessed the light rays emerging from both the eyes of the idol of Goddess Mahakali and touching the holy feet of Shree Maharaj.*

### **Goddess Shree Ambai Devi of Ambejogai –**

Shree Ambai Devi of Ambejogai, Beed District, Maharashtra, was the family deity of Shree Maharaj. Once Smt. Kundatai Khajagiwale, the niece of Shree Maharaj expressed her desire to go to Ambejogai to take the blessings of Shree Ambai Devi. Shree Maharaj hired a taxi and took his niece there. **Smt. Kundatai recalls, “I touched the feet of the Goddess Ambai Devi for the blessings. I felt that touch of the holy feet Goddess Ambai Devi as alive and soft.”** *After returning to Pune, Shree Maharaj asked her “Is the Goddess alive or not?” The experience was very fresh in the memory of the niece Smt. Kundatai. She immediately said “Yes, The Goddess is alive.” It was a miracle.*

### **Shree Shankar Maharaj –**

Shree Shankar Maharaj was a disciple of Shree Swami Samarth. His samadhi (shrine) is located at the left side of Padmavati, on Pune-Katraj road. He was a Dashgranthi Brahmin. (A learned man who has studied the ten books of Vedas. The ten books are Samhita, Brahman, Aranyak, Shiksha, Kalp, Vyakaran, Nighantu, Nirukta, Chhand and Jyotish) He was aged above two hundred fifty years. He had toured along with Shree Swami Samarth the entire world on foot, right from North Pole to South Pole. **Four hours after he took Mahasamadhi (The last conscious communion with God) Shree Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe had come there to pay his obeisance. Then Shree Shankar Maharaj, opened his mouth and ate a leaf of holy Basil from Shree Baba Maharaj and bid goodbye. Then he left this mortal world.**

*Again there was a miracle while constructing the samadhi (shrine) of Shree Shankar Maharaj. It was not getting closed even after adding a number of carts of earth in the shrine. Then Shree Shankar Maharaj blessed one devotee with visionary insight and told him to get one pinchful of earth from the nearby samadhi of sant (saint) Dnyaneshwar Maharaj at Alandi and add the same to his samadhi. When this was done, the mouth of the samadhi got closed and the construction work completed.*

*Near the samadhi of Shree Shankar Maharaj, his two devotees, Shri Baburao and Shri Mehandale had started the fast with obstinacy to get the Divine Vision of Shree Shankar Maharaj. At that time, Shree Maharaj was in the usual habit of riding a bicycle and staying at Laxmi Road, Pune. In fact Shree Shankar Maharaj had told Shree Maharaj often times through visionary insight, to persuade both the obstinate devotees to end their fast. But Shree Maharaj did not pay any attention. One day suddenly one person came to Shree Maharaj on a bicycle and said "Please come with me to the samadhi of Shree Shankar Maharaj. I have brought a new bicycle for you. You please come and persuade both the devotees to end their fast." Shree Maharaj thought a little and took Junaka Bhakar' ( pungent sauce and home made flat bread) with him. Then he rode that new bicycle and went to the samadhi of Shree Shankar Maharaj at Padmavati. There he persuaded both the devotees to end their fast and then gave them 'Jhunaka Bhakar' to eat. After this, he wanted to return to his residence and looked back for the new bicycle as well as that person who had come with him. It was a miracle that both had disappeared.*

*When asked about this incident, Shree Maharaj said "Shree Shankar Maharaj makes fun sometimes."*

### **Shree Shivaji Maharaj—Disciple of Shree Shankar Maharaj**

Shree Shivaji Maharaj was a disciple of Shree Shankar Maharaj and a spiritually accomplished person. Always he was behaving like a child affected by demonic possession. Always he was to play and move about with children only. The public was to consider him as mad. But Shree Maharaj was treating him with proper respect, by knowing his worthiness and spiritual accomplishment. But Shree Maharaj also would insist for the maintenance of the discipline of the temple shrine as well as that discipline loved by Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. Shree Shivaji Maharaj was always following that suggestion.

### **Shree Tatyasaheb From Mumbai.**

Shree Tatyasaheb from Mumbai was also a spiritually accomplished person. Shree Maharaj always was to extend a respectful treatment to him, by knowing his worthiness. But his children as well as the near ones could not recognise his worthiness. **While speaking to Shree Maharaj Shree Tatyasaheb always would say "The very name of Shree Maharaj makes one naturally get absorbed in Sahaj Samadhi (devout meditation).**

#### **Shree Sathe Maharaj From Ratnagiri.**

Shree Sathe Maharaj was working as an officer in a court of justice. He belonged to the tradition of Lord Dattatryeya and was very strict. Shree Maharaj was going to Shree Sathe Maharaj for his blessings but Shree Sathe Maharaj never showed his recognition. Shree Maharaj passed on this information to his Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. Shree Baba Maharaj gave angara (sacred ashes of incense burnt before a deity) to Shree Maharaj and then sent him with that angara to Shree Sathe Maharaj. No sooner, Shree Maharaj went with that angara, Shree Sathe Maharaj welcomed him as "come Vitthal Chaitanya" and told Shree Maharaj to sit by his side. After this incident, Shree Sathe Maharaj always treated Shree Maharaj with love and honour.

#### **Shri Badalibaba From Delhi.**

Shree Ashokrao Joshi (Shree Kaka Maharaj) recalls - "Once Shree Maharaj along with Shree Ashokrao Joshi, Shri Kamalakar Walawalkar and Shri Bajirao Tikekar had been to Delhi, where he met Shri Badalibaba, Aвалиа (a man absorbed in contemplation). Shri Badalibaba was always keeping one bucket with him, which used to contain two litres of cow's milk mixed with ten litres of water.

When anybody asks him a question, Shri Badalibaba would dip a paper in the bucket and take out. That paper would contain the answer to that question written with the ink of cow's milk. This siddhi (accomplishment) was bestowed on him by his Guru (preceptor).

But when Shree Maharaj asked him some questions, Shri Badalibaba could not get the answers on the paper. Then Shri Badalibaba recognised the worthiness of Shree Maharaj and said "This siddhi (accomplishment) is not meant for you. Hence I take shelter under you."

Then Shri Badalibaba requested and got the photo of Shree Maharaj and started worshipping the same. After this, he put pressures on Shree Maharaj to grace him the post of MLA (member of legislative assembly) and Chief Minister of Hariyana. **Immediately Shree Maharaj remonstrated Shri Badalibaba "You are a great fool. Your Guru (preceptor) has showered his grace on you. Hence do not hanker after politics. Try to accomplish the last goal of life."**

### **Omnipresence**

As per the recollection of Shri Kamalakar Walawalkar, Shree Maharaj took maximum pains for the welfare of the devotees. Irrespective of the presence of the number of devotees, Shree Maharaj would utilise his time in guiding the devotees regarding their behaviour in the

daily transactions as well as spirituality. **Pointing a finger to his personal appearance, Shree Maharaj would say “ Donot pay attention to my external appearance. Try to see me in my lustrous form. When would you learn to see me in my lustrous form?”**

Shri Walawalkar further stated that he was associated with Shree Maharaj nearly for thirtyfour years. **Shree Maharaj never boasted regarding his own worthiness. Always Shree Maharaj would say “I am only a sweeper of Sadguru Shree BabaMaharaj.”**

**In one more moment, Shree Maharaj had told Shri Walawalkar“ I was only Lord Rama! I was only Lord Krishna!” When Shri Walawalkar made enquiries regarding the above statement of Shree Maharaj, he came to know that one or two other devotees also had heard the similar words of Shree Maharaj stating “I am present in this table as well as chair also”**

**The above words clearly reflect about the omnipresence of Shree Maharaj.**

### Ganaraj

This incident took place somewhere during 1979-80. Shree Maharaj was pleading with his Sadguru Shree BabaMaharaj to take rebirth again. This pleading was going on since last ten years. **Because the devotion of Shree Maharaj towards his Sadguru, was of utmost limit, some unseen power in the form of a 34 year old child would come to Shree Maharaj occasionally. Shree Maharaj had named that child as “Ganaraj”Everybody was not able to see this child, except a few only, blessed with divine sight, by Shree Maharaj. One servant Shri Pramod Karkare blessed with divine sight, was allotted the duty of keeping the eatables(food) for the child “Ganaraj” at a fixed place and fixed time.That child Ganaraj would go to that fixed place and eat food by sight only.**

Shri Banavali, Shri Bajirao Tikekar, Shri Ibrahim Mastan Bhatkal, Shri Mama Natekar and a few others were blessed with divine sight, with a caution not to utilise this divine sight for any misuse or selfish purpose. Due to some reason,the divine sight of Shri Mama Natekar was withdrawn. **Shri Bajirao Tikekar stated as per his recollection “In the temple shrine, Ganaraj would sit and talk indistinctly with Shree Maharaj while Shree Maharaj performs Sandhya (repetition of Mantras, sipping of water etc. to be performed at sunrise sunset and noon).Ganaraj would ask for pali(ladle) panchpatri(a small cylindrical vessel and tamhan(a circular and shelving metal dish). Then Shree Maharaj would convince Ganaraj “You incarnate in a body like me and come. I would perform your thread ceremony and then you could be able to perform Sandhya” Then Ganaraj was to say “I can do everything . Everything is known to me”.**

**Further Ganaraj would say “I know how to fly” so saying he would fly and go and sit on the top of the building. Such type of unconceivable play went on for four to five years. Shree Maharaj had made arrangements through Pramod Karkare to keep in reserve, daily eatables like banana, milk, biscuits etc., for Ganaraj, in the temple shrine.**

**During 1989 Shree Maharaj decided to take Mahasamadhi. One to one and half years previous to his Mahasamadhi, Ganaraj, entered the body of Shree Maharaj in an indistinct form.**

### Final Year

Even when God assume the human body, He also would be controlled by the destiny. He would not try to escape from the destiny. While Shree Maharaj was carrying out the welfare works connected with the temple shrine of Shree Baba Maharaj, due to the great troubles he took, his health was adversely affected with problems like, high blood pressure, diabetes, severe cough as well as eye-cataract. As a result of these problems his health started becoming weak.

The devotees of Shree Maharaj who were in his company day and night, were very much worried about the failing health of Shree Maharaj. Since Shree Maharaj was in a disembodied state, he never liked anybody enquiring or worrying about his health. Though his health was affected by severe pain, Shree Maharaj never agreed to take the service from anybody. Except for a few fixed devotees, he never allowed anybody else to touch his body. When his health was in a sound and excellent condition, he never felt it absolutely necessary to take sleep or rest.

In the temple shrine at Pune after 3.30 PM, a large number of devotees were coming for taking the blessings of Shree Maharaj. During Dassara (Dassara festival—the tenth day of the first fortnight of the Ashwin month as per Hindu calendar and the month of October or November as per English calendar), Diwali (Diwali festival—the festival of lights held on the night of the New Moon in Ashwin month as per Hindu calendar and the month of October or November as per English calendar), Guru Poornima (Full Moonday, Poornima of Ashadha month as per Hindu calendar and the month of June or July as per English calendar), and other religious festivals, the devotees could find Shree Maharaj sitting straight on his seat, with one leg on the chair without resting on his back, continuously for more than four hours, right from 4.00 PM to 8.30 PM to 9.00 PM.

Shree Ashokrao Joshi (Shree Kaka Maharaj) recalls, “During sickness also Shree Maharaj was to sit straight even for twenty four hours. I was forcing him to sleep by holding one shoulder and Shree Madhav Kajrekar holding the second shoulder. It was rather a mystery of the type of sickness that Shree Maharaj was suffering. I had even suggested to him for a complete medical check up either in Mumbai or Pune. Initially he evaded me, but finally he agreed for a complete check up. Myself along with Shri Walawalkar and Dr. Achyut Joshi, took him to Ruby Nursing Home, Pune. *There a through check up of brain, heart. Kidney along with the scanning of the whole body, as well as, sonography was carried out. But it was a great wonder that no disorder was found anywhere in his body.*”

Shree Ashokrao Joshi (Shree Kaka Maharaj) recollects further *“once at the time of Diwali during the year 1986, the blood sugar level of Shree Maharaj went upto 425. Normally, any ordinary person would have become unconscious because of the high blood sugar, but Shree Maharaj was fully conscious at that time. He passed three days by sleeping and without taking any food. Once during these days, he got up and sat on the bed and I heard him talking loudly”* *“Hey! Ashwini Kumar! (physician of God) come and make me normal!”* *After this, Shree Maharaj again got his blood checked through Dr. Prakash Joshi and Dr. Gharpure. It was a great wonder that the blood sugar level fell down to 85 only.”*

Shree Maharaj was having enormous strength for enduring body pain. In the end, he suffered from some hair crack in his thigh bone. It was difficult for him to stand. He was not able to move his leg one side to other. In this condition he used to lie down on the bed with a cool mind for eight to ten hours continuously. The severe body pain never got reflected on his face. He always used to be very cautious not to trouble anybody. In fact the attendants and the disciples of the temple shrine were ever ready for the service of Shree Maharaj. But to the maximum extent possible, Shree Maharaj avoided this service also.

In the year 1987, Shree Maharaj had been to America for cataract operation of his eye. When his nephew Shri Vinayakrao raised a doubt about the real intention of his journey to America, Shree Maharaj said *“ I would have liked to continue without even the cataract operation. But I had to respect the strong wish of my devotees of America, who had showered on me their utmost love”*

Shri Kamalakar Walawalkar also opined that the journey of Shree Maharaj to America was simply not for eye treatment only. As per Shri Walawalkar, Shree Maharaj never left New Jersey, Queensland and went to Washington but he described in detail, about the city of Washington as well as that of Shri Regan, the then President of America. Not only that, Shree Maharaj had further stated about his meeting with the President Regan as well as the talk he had with the President but the details of the subject of the talks were kept secret.

Shri Vasant Rao Tikekar recollects *“ Even in a foreign country , the personality of Shree Maharaj was found to be so much influential that even the ordinary person like a taxi driver was to address him as a ‘saint’ and talk to him respectfully inspite of the ordinary dress of a Hindu house holder, worn by Shree Maharaj”*

In the last sickness of Shree Maharaj, a number of devotees served him. Sometimes, Shree Maharaj was to behave in an eccentric way and test the person serving him. The devotees were to bear the angry words of Shree Maharaj with great patience. While doing service, the devotees were to behave with their own skill and look towards the superficial anger of Shree Maharaj with love.

Shri Ashokarao Joshi(Shree Kaka Maharaj),Shri Madhav Kajarekar, Shri Wamanrao Joshi, Shri Vinayakrao Joshi, Shri Khushiram Kukreti, Shri Sudhakar Mone, Shri Baliram , Shri Hanumanta, Mrs. Aparnatai Kondkar, Mrs. Shubhada Jadhav vahini,Sow Malutai Walawalkar, Shri Amol Kondkar, Shri Kamalakar Walawalkar, Shri Vasant Tikekar, Shri Bandooshet Jadhav, Dr. Achyut Joshi, Sow Kundatai Khajagiwale and many more Devotees had rendered service to Shree Maharaj, with an earnest longing,a feeling of devotion and great sincerity.

Before leaving this mortal world, Shree Maharaj had got the disciples as well as the devotees, mentally prepared by actual deeds,suggestions and sometimes by visionary insight. Mrs. Aparnatai Kondkar recollects one incident “ It took place during 1984-85, in Dervan. When Mrs. Malutai Walawalkar, Mrs.Snehprabha Tikekar, Mrs.Jadhav vahini and myself (Mrs. Aparnatai) were together, Shree Maharaj came out from the temple and said “Hi, Malu, I would be leaving this mortal body in a few months” and so saying he went outside and sat on the chair.By hearing this, all the four of us started crying. When Shree Maharaj came to know that we are crying, he came inside the room, and spoke caressingly *“Have you all gone mad?I am not going anywhere. Even if I leave this mortal body, I would still continue to remain alive.”* All four of us stopped crying and started laughing.”

This way, Mrs.Aparnatai Kondkar recollected another incident“**In the last sickness of Shree Maharaj, I had a good fortune of rendering service to him. Very often he was speaking about his childhood, his separation from his nearest relatives and the sad situation when his elder sister Godutai, who very much loved him, also left him in his childhood. Controlling his emotions, he told me “ Even if Godutai left me, you are there.Is n’t it? A person comes alone in this world and also goes alone from this world.I am only a servant of my Sadguru Shree BabaMaharaj”**

**Mrs. Aparnatai Kondkar further continued “ One night at about 1.30 AM , Shree Maharaj woke me up and said “Kondkar Kaku,go and wake up that Mahadev(Madhav Kajarekar) and bring him here” so Shri Madhav Kajrekar woke up at 1.30 AM, from his deep sleep and came and stood before Shree Maharaj. Then Shree Maharaj asked him one single question “Tell me, Madhav, who owns this dwelling place? Who built this?” In half sleep, Shri Madhav replied to Shree Maharaj “You only built this dwelling place.” In reality, this was a correct answer. But this answer terribly irritated Shree Maharaj who asked me “Tell me Kondkar Kaku,to whom this place belongs?” By seeing the terribly angry mood of Shree Maharaj, I replied “This place belongs to Sadguru Shree BabaMaharaj who is getting done everything through you only. Is it not?”After hearing this reply, Shree Maharaj calmed down. This way Shree Maharaj was trying to impress about his incapability as well as the greatness of Sadguru Shree BabaMaharaj on the minds of his disciples and devotees.**

Shri Madhav Kajarekar recollected regarding the vigilant nature of Shree Maharaj about the welfare of his disciples and devotees even during his sickness, “In the year 1988, right from the month of May onwards, I got an opportunity to personally prepare meals and serve Shree Maharaj. Also I got the opportunity to serve him with daily tea, breakfast and medicines. Out of all, I was happiest when Shree Maharaj was to call me “ Oh, Madhav!. Very often he made me sit by his side. I always liked to talk to him as well as listen to his talks, sometimes household and sometimes spiritual , which Shree Maharaj was to connect and give me a narration.It was a golden opportunity for me to hear this narration.

At that time, his health was becoming very delicate, which affected his eating habits. Sometimes he would eat very little two times at noon and night. But sometimes he would eat only once. His food intake had also come down. He liked very much spicy and salty Vade(fried cakes), bhaji(tasty preparation of gram flour) as well as dhiradi(kind of pan cake). These items when served, Shree Maharaj would taste a little and happily distribute the remaining to his devotees. Since fifteen days prior to the leaving of his mortal body, Shree Maharaj stopped eating with his own hand. He would eat only limited food if fed by somebody. Even taking tea also became limited. **Before leaving his mortal body he would tell everybody present near him “ I am present in everyone of you. Only I am giving up this mortal body.”**

Shri Madhav Kajrekar recollected further “ **Once Shree Maharaj told me to sit near him. Then he spoke .An eternal thing is ever existing. Keep faith on this. A perishable thing would certainly get destroyed.”**

Two months prior to the leaving of his mortal body, Shree Maharaj started showing wrong signs. He removed and kept away the photo of Kalabhairav(A form of Lord Shiva). Then he told to remove and keep that curtain where the embroidery of Lord Ganesh was carried out and with whom (Lord Ganesh) Shree Maharaj was talking. He also stopped sitting outside on the chair. When Mrs. Aparna Kaku enquired about the reasons for carrying out these strange actions, **Shree Maharaj replied “ I will wind up the play established by me. I donot want to trouble Ashok(Shree Ashok Kaka). If he wants to carry on the same play, he would certainly do it. I am quite sure of that. But I donot hope that he also should do the same because I have done it”**

A few days afterwards, Shree Maharaj showed his desire to walk three rounds outside his sleeping room. He completed two rounds with the help of Mrs. Aparna Kaku. In the third round , because he lost some balance, he could complete that round with the help of Shri Madhav Kajrekar only. After this, he always was to sleep in the room only. He never personally tried to get from the bed or do the walking etc.

Under this situation only, Shree Maharaj spoke to Shree Ashok Kaka(Shree Kaka Maharaj) “Hi, Ashok, would you look after all this complete set up?”

Shree Ashok Kaka replied “To look after this entire set up is not possible for any ordinary person” so saying Shree Ashok Kaka went out upto the verandah.

Shree Maharaj started calling him loudly “Hi, Ashok, Ashok,”

Shree Ashok Kaka avoided to reply as he was sure that Shree Maharaj would get an affirmative reply from him and hence he went out of the room to pluck rose flowers. Then Shree Maharaj told Mrs. Aparna Kaku “Go and bring him here.” Mrs. Aparna Kaku replied “Shree Ashok Kaka has gone to the garden” Immediately *Shree Maharaj said “You tell him I am not going to die today” Shree Maharaj urther said “When time comes, Ashok himself would certainly look after all this entire set up.”*

### Mahasamadhi

Since there was no sign of any improvement in the health of Shree Maharaj,all the devotees located in distant places were intimated on telephone.Gradually all the devotees started assembling in the temple shrine at Pune.Every devotee started praying God “**Please shower good health and long life to Shree Maharaj, so that all his devotees would get his blessings and his association for a long time.**”

Shree Maharaj was aware of the mental condition of his devotees. In the last four days, Shree Maharaj told Shri Madhav Kajrekar and Shri Vinayakrao Joshi(the nephew of Shree Maharaj)“**For the sake of my devotees only I postponed my departure from this world, a number of times. In fact I was to give up this mortal body on the day of Ram Navami (The birth day of Lord Rama. This falls on nineth day of first half of Chaitra month as per Hindu Calender and March or April month as per English Calender) but my Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj did not permit me. But now, I donot want to continue with this mortal body. Hence I pray my Sadguru Baba Maharaj to permit me to give up this mortal body. You would never come to know the exact time of my departure from this mundane existence.**” These words of Shree Maharaj proved true.

By describing the last few moments of the life of Shree Maharaj,Shri Vinayakrao Joshi(the nephew of Shree Maharaj) , recollected ‘ It was the day of Sunday on 21 st May 1989. For more than twentyfour hours, the devotees were sitting wakeful around the bedsread of Shree Maharaj without food or even a cup of tea. The other devotees were standing nearby here and there carrying out Namasmaraan( continuous repetition of the name of God or Sadguru). Dr. Shripad Banavali and Dr.Sudhir Joshi were rendering medical treatment to Shree Maharaj, with all their skill, by the help of other doctors.

**Shree Maharaj responded by winking his eyelids for the call of the doctors as “Maharaj”. All devotees sighed a relief and became free from tension. All washed their faces with cold water, became fresh and went for a cup of tea. Since Shri Vinayakrao was not taking tea, he stood there near the bedstead only, watching with the earnest hope that Shree Maharaj would become alright, open his eyes and look at him. The doctor came back after taking tea. He examined again Shree Maharaj and uttered the words “ everything finished”. By hearing these two painful words, everybody started crying, choked with emotion. In fact nobody knew the exact moment of the departure of Shree Maharaj from this mundane existence!**

Shree Maharaj had already decided the place for his funeral ceremonies. It took place in the place owned by Shree Maharaj which was next to the temple shrine of his Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj. and for three days, the funeral pile was burning. After three days the devotees started collecting bones. They found one gold ring of Shree Maharaj without even a slight damage. This was really an evidence of the spiritual power of Shree Maharaj. In fact Shree Maharaj was very much against performing any miracles. He was pitying the people who were coming to him for their worldly problems. Very often he would not be ready to talk to such people. **He would say very often “ Make good advantage of this human life. Think of the upliftment of your soul. Start from this moment only. It is not late even now. I am there to help you.”**

**After completing the mission of his life of incarnation, Shree Maharaj merged himself in eternity! His life form got dissolved in formless existence! His form attributes became attributeless. The drop became Sindhu river! The great personage who took birth on this earth for the upliftment of the depressed lives, attained divinity after completing the task of his incarnation!**

### Swaroop Sampradaya

**Swaroop Sampradaya sect is the doctrine of oneness incorporated with the principle of philosophy. The Swaroop Sampradaya mainly promotes the worship of attributeless. Even then it approves the worship of deity having attributes. In short the sect provides the guidance for leading the common people from attributes to attributeless. The primeval preceptor and Lord of this religious sect is Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva instructed Goddess Parvati through “Guru Geeta” this doctrine of oneness. Through Adinath Lord Shiva, this principle of Swaroop Sampradaya sect was passed on to Lord Vishnu, Lord Brahmdev and sages Vasishtha, Shakti, Parashar, Vyas, Shukdeo and further through brilliant tradition of these sages. This Swaroop Sampradaya sect was nurtured by great saints like Shree**

**Govindpad, Shree Jagadguru Shankaracharya, Shree Vidyananda swami, Shree Krishnasaraswati, Shreemad Narasinha Saraswati.**

Since the great personage Shree Swami Samarth originally descended from Shreemad Narsinha Saraswati, he is nobody else than Lord Dattatreya Himself. Hence the 'Saraswati Sect' of Swaroop Sampradaya was being recognised as the tradition of Lord Dattatreya.

Shree Sadguru 'Guru-Shishya, Shishya -Guru' (Preceptor-Disciple, Disciple-Preceptor) is the tradition of Swaroop Sampradaya (the tradition where-in, the aspirant concentrates on viewing the 'Atman' the 'soul'). The sadguru (The great teacher) always confines further, his spiritual work of the Swaroop Sampradaya through a worthy person who has attained spiritual realization. Hence Shree Maharaj before discarding his mundane existence, blessed his worthy disciple, Shree Ashok Raghunath Joshi (Shree Kaka Maharaj) with all the authoritative rights of the Swaroop Sampradaya to carry further the spiritual work of the Sampradaya, even though Shree Ashok Kaka, was not very much willing to do the same.

### Conclusion

Sadguru Shree Maharaj was a saint of rare excellence, born as an incarnation. In truth, the most excellent essence manifested in a form possessed of embodying properties and attributes. Shree Maharaj uplifted the common people by his virtue, valour, prowess speech, behaviour, proximity, company and touch. He made them work-conscious and duty-conscious. Though he discarded his mundane existence he left behind his indivisible personality for the welfare of the common people as well as his devotees.

The programmes conducted during the festivals, round the year in the temple-shrine, inspire the devotees with the culture of clean dealings and pure behaviour. From the dealings of the temple-shrine, one would learn that one should maintain virtuous conduct, one should carry on all the works irrespective of small or big, high or low, coming in one's way, without any attachment and as a service to God. This was the wish of Shree Maharaj. Further as per the teachings of Shree Maharaj a family man need not withdraw altogether from worldly engagements and connections and proceed to Himalaya for God-realisation.

This human body, hard to get, is really nice. The sense organs are also good but the mind is better than sense organs. More than mind the intellect is better. Beyond the

intellect, the doctrine of the soul as well as the doctrine of spiratualism are the best. One has to destroy entirely the body identification. This is possible only with kind grace of a sadguru.

Nobody can abstain from routine of work. But the education for carrying out selfless work can be had from this temple-shrine. If one performs his duties by virtuous conduct, with repetition of God's name (Namsmaran), then one's body, mind, intellect as well as his heart gets purified and thereby one would get easily the blessings of a sadguru which leads him to highest goal. This culture has been implemented very effectively by Shree Maharaj.

Regarding the devotees coming to this temple-shrine, even today the same culture has been further continued by Shree Kaka Maharaj for the welfare of the devotees. For the sake of devotees Shree Maharaj is still moving about in the temple-shrine in a spirit form having attributes and qualities.

The uncommon ceremonies, the observances and behaviour of saints born as an incarnation as well as saints of rare excellence leave a permanent influence on the devotees. Out of them a fully blessed, true and good disciple only would continue this great work of rare excellence coming in regular succession with a new vigour and inspiration for the welfare of the devotees and people.

A common man cannot recognise a real saint. Only a real saint can recognise another saint. A great saint who gets absorbed in the sea of devotion, an ascetic who has attained perfection with strict control of conduct by following the procedures, a wise man who has attained the true knowledge by the restraint of all the subtle senses, can only recognise one another. But it is extremely difficult to recognise a selfless man of action (a karmayogi, free from any expectations) like Shree Maharaj. This is because, Shree Maharaj behaves like a common man in day to day business and mingles in the society. His actions appear to be full of expectations. But in reality his actions are devoid of any expectations only! Infact, the saints like Shree Maharaj build up with undoubted authority, full confidence in the devotees thereby making them doubtless, selfless, action oriented and duty conscious.

A saint like Shree Maharaj becomes, the cause of the deliverance and welfare of the devotees by the action of his good manners, good considerations, good tendency, virtuous conduct and also who places one's ideals before the common public in one's own style with expertness, skill and activity. Shree Maharaj always showed openly the uniformity in his thought, ideas, pronounciation and conduct in a simple way. This itself was the "Vihit

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**Nishkam Karma”(Appropriate act or deed done without expectation of any fruit or reward in return) of Shree Maharaj!**

*“sarvepi sukhinh santu! sarve santu niraamayah !  
sarve bhadrani pashyantu! Maa kashchit dukkhamapnuyaat!”*

*Aum! Purnamadah purnamidam purnaam purnamudachyate!  
Purnasya prnamaaday purnamevaavshishhyate!*

**II Shubham Bhavatu II**

### Shree Kaka Maharaj

With a view to further propagate Swroop Sampradaya after Shree Maharaj and to complete the goal set by him as well as to provide proper direction and guidance to his devotees for whom he had tremendous affection, Shree Maharaj blessed Shree Ashok Raghunath Joshi alias Shree Kaka Maharaj as his successor.

It is with tremendous zeal and efficiency the parallel of which cannot be found anywhere, Shree Kaka Maharaj also known as Ashok Kaka, shouldered his responsibility and with the full blessings of Shree Maharaj, carried out the enormous task left behind by his preceptor, Shree Maharaj.

Shree Ashok Kaka alias Shree Kaka Maharaj was born in a religious and spiritually oriented family in a village KhanuMuth of Ratnagiri District Maharashtra State, Western India, where his father Shri Raghunathrao and uncle Shri Vinayakrao were staying together. Shree Maharaj stayed in their house for six months when in Ratnagiri.

Shri Raghunathrao, a virtuous with spiritual bent of mind was initiated by Shree Maharaj and also blessed by Shree Nana Maharaj Barve of Dabhol (Devgad), Shree Bhalchandra Maharaj of Kanakavli and Shree Rahul Maharaj of Kudal, all from Sindhudurg District, Maharashtra state. Hence the childhood of Shree Ashok Kaka has been influenced by the association of saints with his family.

When Shree Ashok Kaka attained the age of 7-8 years, very often during his sleep he was experiencing the explosion of a brilliant and illuminated spark in his head. As a result, he was to get up and cry. Since this experience continued, Shree Maharaj advised him to worship Lord Hanuman(Monkey God Maruti). During 1954, when Shree Ashok Kaka attained the age of 10 years, Shree Maharaj initiated him as his disciple.

During his school and collage education in Ratnagiri District and Civil Engineering education in Aurangabad District, till he joined the town planning department in Kolhapur, Shree Sadguru Krishnabhau Tembe Maharaj(Pangari.Maharashtra) not only guided him throughout but also predicted about the future happenings in advance to Shree Ashok Kaka.

During this entire period Shree Ashok Kaka had continued the worship of Lord Hanuman as advised by Shree Maharaj.After his transfer to Pune city, Pune District, Shree Ashok Kaka came directly under the association of Shree Maharaj. During his stay in Pune, Lord Hanuman came in his dream for three consecutive nights, ordering him to go to Himalayas for worshipping Shree Prabhu Ram(Lord Rama). But he was not allowed to go by Shree Maharaj as he had dependant aged parents, wife and children.

Since 1976 onwards, Shree Ashok Kaka started visiting the Pune Temple-shrine(Muth) regularly. After some years,as per the orders of Shree Maharaj, he left the Government job and joined Shree Samarth Development corporation run by Shri Walawalkar. As the job was in Mumbai, he made a home there.

After some years , as per the advice of Shree Maharaj, he started staying permanently in Pune to carry out civil works pertaining to the Temple-shrine(Muth). This also enabled him to render service to his preceptor, Shree Maharaj. This could be conveniently done by Shree Ashok Kaka, entirely due to the full support of his wife who stayed in Mumbai and shouldered all family responsibilities.

By this time, Shree Ashok kaka had made good progress in spirituality and hence Shree Maharaj had showered Divine grace on Shree Ashok Kaka. Some times there would be exchange of hot words between him and Shree Maharaj, as both had fiery nature. But things would subside soon, as there was father-son relation between the two.

Taking a very stringent test of Shree Ashok Kaka, regarding his devotedness towards Sadguru (Preceptor), the wakefulness in the accomplishment and putting up strenuous efforts, the lack of sluggishness in the working for 16-18 hours a day, Shree Maharaj had allotted Shree Ashok Kaka all the important responsibilities of the Temple-shrine(Muth), in addition to the building work.

The relationship between Shree Maharaj and Shree Ashok Kaka was based upon lofty sentiment and was on a vey higher spiritual plane.By observing the excessive favour showered by Shree Maharaj on Shree Ashok Kaka a number of devotees who were coming to the Temple-shrine since a long time were feeling uneasy with doubts in their minds. But who would read the mind of Shree Maharaj?

In this context Shree Ashok Kaka stated his recollection, “ One day Shree Maharaj wished to see a film. He instructed one devotee to bring three tickets of a particular cinema theatre. Shree Maharaj told Shree Ashok Kaka to sit in the rikshaw, where Shree Maharaj and Shri Banavali were already sitting to go to that theatre. Shri Banavali had a strong doubt in his mind “**Shree Ashok Kaka has started coming to the Temple-shrine recently only. Then why does Shree Maharaj shower so much favour on Shree Ashok Kaka? Shree Maharaj could instantly read the mind of Shri Banavali and said “Banavali, Ashok and my acquaintance is very very old”**”

Shree Ashok Kaka stated one more unforgettable experience of his life “One day morning at about 11.30 to 12.00AM Shree Maharaj was sitting all alone in the verandah as usual on a wooden chair and I was sitting in front of him on a bench. While talking on the day to day works as usual, Shree Maharaj asked me in a soft tone “ Oh! Ashok! Shall I rest my foot on your thigh? I replied “Yes, please keep it! Is there any problem with your leg?” Without replying , Shree Maharaj placed his right foot on my left thigh and said “ catch hold of the toe of my foot” Accordingly Shree Ashok Kaka caught hold of the toe of the foot of shree Maharaj. Thereafter Shree Maharaj sat quietly for some time in that position. Then he exclaimed “ Oh! Ashok! Even if you have not felt any change in your body like tremours in the body, shooting pain in the back bone or getting lost in meditation, I have showered all my yogic power on you. When proper time comes, I myself would utilise that power on your behalf, for the welfare of the people” At that time I never knew about his future plans”

Shree Maharaj had already planned in advance to appoint Shree Ashok Kaka as his successor who had the competence for preserving all the traditions of the Temple-shrine as well as everything about the day to day rituals, the festivals round the year and providing guidance to the devotees in distress. But nobody including even Ashok Kaka, were aware of this decision of Shree Maharaj.

Shri Amol Kondkar and Smt. Kondkar were the devotees of Shree Maharaj and staying in the Temple-shrine. Shri Kondkar stated about one of his recollection “ During the last illness of Shree Maharaj, he called both of us and informed about his taking Mahasamadhi. My wife started crying . At that time ,Shree Ashok Kaka was instructing somebody in a loud tone, regarding some work. When Shree Maharaj heard the loud tone of Shree Ashok Kaka outside, he spoke to me “Do you hear that person(Shree Ashok Kaka) shouting outside? Now infact, I am that person only. After my departure from this world, Shree Ashok Kaka only would look after you.”

In this way only, once when Shri wamanrao Shridhar Joshi a devotee as well as nephew of Shree Maharaj started crying on learning about the likely separation from his uncle in the near future, then Shree Maharaj consoled him saying “ Even if I give up this mortal body, I would still live and operate through the body of Ashok(Ashok Kaka).”

Shri Dinanath Banavali who was being closely associated for a prolonged period, who was favoured with Divine grace a number of times and who was blessed with Divine sight of Lord Dattatreya, one day asked Shree Maharaj as to who would succeed him?

Shree Maharaj replied “ You would come to know one year after my departure from this worldly existence.”

Accordingly, when all the devotees had assembled in the Temple-shrine for the first death anniversary of Shree Maharaj, Shri Banavali spoke in the assembly “ I got visionary sight in my dream last night. I saw first Lord Dattatreya, then Shree Swami Samarth, then Shree Beedkar Maharaj, then Shree Baba Maharaj, then Shree Maharaj and last Shree Ashok Kaka.”

Moreover the devotees Shri Harshekaka and Shri Rangnath Bhatwadekar, who were in the prolonged association of Shree Maharaj were also blessed with a similar visionary insight, confirming Shree Ashok Kaka as the successor of Shree Maharaj.

In fact before taking Mahasamadhi (The last conscious communion with God), to clear all the doubts of the devotees, Shree Maharaj had declared in unambiguous terms, before Shri Madhavrao Kajrekar and other devotees that Shree Ashok Kaka would be the successor. But Shree Ashok Kaka who was present at that time did not agree with this proposal and hence he requested Shree Maharaj “This entire responsibility should be allotted to Shri Vamanrao Shridhar Joshi only”. Shree Maharaj simply hooted out this request of Shree Ashok Kaka and again declared “This Ashok himself is my son. He would shoulder all the responsibilities after me. I myself would continue all the works on his behalf”

Shree Maharaj before taking Mahasamadhi had told a few devotees including Shree Ashok Kaka and Shri Banavali “After my departure from this world, meet the great saint, who has attained self-realization (Siddhapurush) Shree Dada Maharaj Kelkar of Sangli.” Accordingly Shree Ashok Kaka, Shri Banavali along with a few devotees, went to Sangli and took blessings of Shree Dada Maharaj Kelkar. When Shree Kelkar Maharaj had come to the Temple-shrine (Muth) at Pune he quickly composed metrically an Aarati (The piece of poetry chanted on the occasion of a waving burning lamp around an idol) introducing a line there in stating “Ashok Putralagi ! Swaye Preme Kuravaliti “ (Shree Maharaj fondles with great love son Ashok)”. By introducing this line in the composition of the Aarati, Shree Kelkar Maharaj brought it to the notice of all the devotees that Shree Maharaj has selected Shree Ashok Kaka as his successor.

On 24<sup>th</sup> April 1991 Shree Avadhootanand Saraswati had come to the Temple-shrine (Muth) as usual. He had become very old and residing at Himalayas. He was a fully realised saint (Siddhapurush) and belonged to Saraswati Sect (Sawroop Sampradaya). Shree Ashok Kaka treated him with full reverence. In the presence of all devotees, pointing his finger towards Shree Ashok Kaka, Shree Avadhootanand Saraswati addressed all devotees “Shree Ashok Kaka will alone speak and all the rest would listen to him. Then there would be great joy everywhere in the Temple-shrine. Shree Maharaj is a fully realised great saint. He is obviously Lord Dattatreya himself. You are all very fortunate to get the company, love and guidance of Shree Maharaj as well as Shree Ashok Kaka. Shree Maharaj has fully blessed Shree Ashok Kaka. You are all experiencing the same. Hence keep aside all your doubts and shed all your depressions as well as your thoughts for acquiring respect and praise from others, then there would be joy everywhere.”

This has been experienced by all the devotees. In a very short time, Shree Ashok Kaka got built up exquisite stone structures with sharp features of pleasing appearance, in the form of Temple-shrines (Muth) of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj and Shree Maharaj at Pune, marvellous Shree Samarth Temple at Swami Samarth Nagar Andheri (west) Mumbai and beautiful Shree Samarth udyan at Shree Kshetra Dervan. This has resulted in the increase of day to day presence of the devotees as well as their enthusiasm. After the Mahasamahi of Shree Maharaj, there was complete disorganisation in Shree Kshetra Dervan. But after the guidance of Shree Ashok Kaka, in a short time, there was change in the atmosphere with full activities.

During January 1992, at Pune Temple-shrine, with utmost ease, Shree Ashok Kaka arranged the performance of "Laksha chandi Yadnya—a sacrifice for the benefit of the entire humanity." It is to be noted here that during the last fifty years, this yadnya (sacrifice) was never performed either in Maharashtra or entire India as only virtuous personalities of tremendous eminence can only get performed this sacrifice (yadnya) whose accomplishment is considered to be very difficult due to the complicated and stupendous scale of the religious rituals involved in it. This Yadnya (sacrifice) was conducted for seventeen days from January 08 1992 to January 24, 1992. For this yadnya, 980 Brahmins from various corners of India had come to Pune. The rituals connected with the sacrifice would begin at 06.30 AM and continue upto 04.00-05.00 PM everyday. Then there would be prasada (a sweet dish offered to idol and distributed at a religious place) in the form of meals. All the senior Brahmins gathered in the yadnya remarked in unanimous voice—

"Never in our lifetime had we ever seen a sacrifice (yadnya) of such magnitude performed with such discipline and we really doubt whether even in future we would be able to witness the performance of such sacrifice. It would become possible only if Shree Ashok Kaka himself again decides to perform such a sacrifice"

After witnessing that yadnya (sacrifice) all the devotees were convinced that Shree Ashok Kaka (Shree Kaka Maharaj) was not an ordinary human being but some great Divine power.

As a successor to Shree Maharaj a brief summary of the comprehensive works carried out by Shree Ashok Kaka, as well as for the awakening of the public is as follows—

Shree Maharaj was the leaseholder for plot No 937/D at Pune, which was owned by Smt. Nirmalatai Neelkanth Khare. A new lease deed was prepared in the name of Shri K.L. Walawalkar and Shri V.M. Tikekar for 50 years valid upto year 2039.

A lease deed was also prepared for the plot No. 937/C at Pune in the name of Shree Ashok Kaka.

In the year 1990, a beautiful and neat temple-shrine of Shree Maharaj was got constructed at Pune.

Within next six months, an exquisite temple-shrine of Shree Baba Maharaj was also got erected in Place of the existing tinshed, at Pune.

A yadnya Mandap(Open building consecrated to God and sacrificial rituals) of area 13000-14000 sq. ft was got built up at Pune.

A sandalwood chariot of the size 7 ft length and eleven feet height and fully engraved was also got prepared at Pune, in a short time, as per the wish of Shree Maharaj.

After this, a rare Laksha chandi yadnya(sacrifice) was performed here at Pune as per the wish of Shree Maharaj. This yadnya(sacrifice) was never performed either in Maharashtra or entire India for the last fifty years.

As desired by Shree Maharaj the Akhand Namasmaran (the continuous chanting of the name of God) namely “Shree Swami Samarth Jay Jay Swami Samarth” was started in the Temple-shrine of Shree Baba Maharaj from April 11, 1992(Chaitra Shuddha 9 Shake 1914 )and till today it is being continued without interruption by the enthusiasm of the devotees.

Whatever festivals were celebrated during the period of Shree Maharaj in the Temple-shrines are still being celebrated systematically in the similar way by the devotees. During these festivals the devotees feel and experience the Chaitanyaroop(The Supreme being considered as the soul of the Universe) of Shree Maharaj everywhere. Two more festivals viz. the birth anniversary as well as the death anniversary of Shree Maharaj are added now . In fact, there is an appreciable increase in the devotees coming to the Temple shrines, nowadays

**Dervan Trust** Before the Mahasamadhi of Shree Maharaj during the one or two year period of his sickness and a few months after that, the arrangement at Dervan was completely thrown out of gear. When Shree Ashok Kaka started going to Dervan, he exerted himself and brought about the following improvements which restored the spirit and enthusiasm of the devotees.

In the Temple-shrine at Dervan, from April 24, 1992 onwards the Akhand Namasmaran(continuous chanting of the name of the God) namely“*Shree Swami Samarth Jay Jay Swami Samarth*” was started. It is being continued even now by the grace of Shree Swami Samarth.

The Temple of Shree Dnyananath got built up through the villagers.

In the Trustsite at Dervan, two new wells were constructed which provided enough water.

Inside and outside the Gad(Fort) at Dervan, all statues had become spoiled due to rain and sun. These spoiled statues were got repainted and for protecting them from rain and sun, tinsheds were erected.

Necessery repair works were caried out in the Gad(Fort). The spoiled wall paintings were got repainted which brought life in the paintings.

The fields of the Trust were provided with embankments and special attention was paid, which resulted in the additional income from the fields.

The Balwadi(Nursery) as well as cultural centres of Dervan, were got repaired and latest toys made available for children.

In all the schools of the surrounding villages, from fifth upto tenth standards the first three students with merit in each class, were granted monthly scholarships.

In the surrounding villages, during festival period, the needy people were provided oil, rice and sugar at reduced rates, lesser than that of rationing prices, four times in a year, bearing financial loss. Blankets were also provided to the poor people at subsidised rates.

In the surrounding villages, the poor families were provided with financial help as per their requirement for the marriage functions in those families.

In the surrounding villages, all the temples were completely renovated. In all the schools the floors were renovated with stone slabs.

Every year, about 200 students were Provided with books, school bags, and raincoats, completely free.

In the villages for the houses of the poor people, thatched roofs made up of straw were replaced with tiles, free of charge.

By appointing a suitable Brahmin for the temple, the worship and acts pertaining to it as well as other religious ceremonials(viz. reading of a religious book of 700 stanzas, Ekadashani, the prayer and the like religious rites) were started regularly.

Free medical facilities were made available for all the twenty four hours.

In Dervan trees were planted on both sides of the road which made the surroundings beautiful and provided shade to the public. Similarly on the hill owned by the Trust, a large number of trees were planted.

Like Pune, the celebration of all festivals were started in Dervan as done earlier.

Singing religious hymns with implicit faith in the praise of Sadguru, externally executing Oneself continuously for works, selflessly, but internally concentrating on transcendental Knowledge, greatly honouring Vedic religion with utmost reverence to saints, spiritually longing for augmenting the magnificance and splendour of the Temple shrines at Pune as well as Dervan, a fiery traditionist and a selfless Karmayogi(One who follows the path of God realisation by dedicating the fruits of one's work to God) Shree Kaka Maharaj is a true and most capable successor of Shree Maharaj. This way, Shree Maharaj even after his Mahasamadhi continued his tremendous, temporal as well as spiritual welfare works through Shree kaka Maharaj.

This is one of the rarest example where, even after the Mahasamadhi of a great personage like Shree Maharaj, all his welfare works continued and the purpose fully served.

**Part II**

*Miracles and Devotees Experiences ...*

*"A Sadguru is the supreme energy manifest and from time to time he displays his true nature in the form of his leela's which are incomprehensible to the normal human beings and hence called miracles. An attempt has been made here to document a subset of these miracles as experienced by the devotees"*

*"Though the bodily existence of Shree Sadguru Digambaradas Maharaj ended with his Mahasamadhi, he continues to live in the Samadhi Mandir for the benefit of the devotees as promised"*

## Supernatural Powers of Shree Maharaj

*The existence of a ring of divinity around a saint is felt by those who are in close association of the saint. The devotees also experience miracles from time to time. The occurrence of miracles gives confirmation about the divine nature of a Sadguru to the devotees*

*This was absolutely true in the case of Shree Sadguru Digambar Das Maharaj.*

### **Experiences & Miracles**

#### “Shree Maharaj Supported me like a Brother”

*Experience of Smt Nirmalatai Neelkanth Khare, Wardha , Maharashtra , regarding Sadguru Shree Digambar Das Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj.*

*(Smt Nirmalatai is the daughter of Shree Baba Maharaj, the Sadguru of Shree Maharaj)*

In the year 1955 during the time of Festival (the tenth day of the first fortnight of Ashwin-the month of October or November) a middle aged gentleman came to our house at wardha, by morning train. He introduced himself as Shri Vithal Ganesh Joshi, the disciple of Shree Baba Maharaj. He stated that he was not present in Pune, at the last moment when Shree Baba Maharaj took Mahasamadhi ( the last conscious communion with God). But now he had decided to render service to Shree Baba Maharaj in the private plot at 937/D, Chatushringee Road, Shivaji Nagar, Pune-16, owned by Shree Baba Maharaj.

Then my husband Shri Nilkanth Khare(Shri Bhau) decided to discuss the subject in detail after the lunch and afternoon rest. Afterwards it was discussed in detail and decided that Shree Maharaj will take the plot, 937/D (where the last rites of Shree Baba Maharaj was carried out and the samadhi was located) on rental basis. Out of the thousands of disciples of Shree Baba Maharaj my husband found Shree Maharaj the most trustworthy disciple.

I strongly feel that the worship and performance of various religious rituals are being carried out at the temple shrine of Shree Baba Maharaj by the divine grace of Shree Swami Samarth.

In the month of May 1956, myself and my husband (Shri Bhau) came to Pune and after taking into account all aspects the plot 937/D was handed over to Shri Vithalrao Ganesh Joshi on rental basis.

We belonged to a middle class family. Since my husband was the eldest, he had to shoulder all the responsibilities. This included the education of younger brothers, marriage of the sister and welfare of the mother and other members of the family. It was a difficult task while taking care of all the duties of the entire family. We could shoulder all these responsibilities only by the blessings of Shree Baba Maharaj and the good wishes, moral support and cooperation of this elder brother like Shri Vithalrao Joshi (Shree Maharaj). Because of the full support of Shree Maharaj, our family prosperity was restored again. In the spiritual field, we were observing daily worship of Lord Shankar and other religious rites and also hospitality.

For any difficulty I used to consult Shree Maharaj, who used to give the solution for my problems. He always used to say ‘Nirmalatai (Sister Nirmala) as long as I am alive, you need not worry for anything’. He looked after me as my elder brother and even now, for any problems if I remember him (invoke him) my work gets done successfully and I get peace of mind. Shree Maharaj never allowed me

to feel the deficiency of a real brother in my life. Very often, Shree Maharaj used to get angry on my husband (Shri Bhau) but very soon he would say 'What does our advocate say' and enquire about Shri Bhau, with admiration.

Our present domestic circumstances are excellent. In my spiritual routine life on daily basis, I do God worship, prayers and continuous remembrances of my Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj and meditation. As per the advice of Shree Maharaj I invoke (repeat) 'Om Nama Shivay' (prayer to Lord Shiva) daily. That helps in solving all my difficulties. I get a lot of peace of mind. It drives away all the evil thoughts. By reading daily the aarti (waving of a lamp before a deity while simultaneously singing a song about the deity) as well as the biography of Shree Baba Maharaj written by Shree Maharaj gives me a lot of happiness.

Shree Maharaj has always respected me as his sister. He always used to give me medical advice as well as the solution to the problems of our children along with their welfare. Even after accepting the wrath of a number of devotees, he did not show any disrespect to me. He always used to say with admiration "I have got only one sister. She should receive the Bhaubeej from me". (Bhaubeej – the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of Kartik (November month) when brothers meet sisters with presents) whenever I go to the temple-shrine of Shree Baba Maharaj at Pune, he (Shree Maharaj) always used to give me saree and blouse piece and he saw to it that I never return home empty-handed. Shree Maharaj was always humble. Despite having such big properties, he never exhibited his greatness amongst the public.

He (Shree Maharaj) always used to say "whatever I possess belongs to Shree Baba Maharaj, I am only his servant". He lived his entire life for carrying out the works and spreading of the greatness and fame of Shree Baba Maharaj in this world. He presented the ideal of Guru Seva (worship and service to the preceptor) in this world.

As I could not render my service to Shree Baba Maharaj (who was my own father) likewise I was extremely unlucky in rendering service to Shree Maharaj also. Whenever I used to go to Pune, Shree Maharaj always took a lot of pains to give the best of the treatment. But when I went to Pune, to see him in the last days of his illness, I could only get the sight of his lifeless body. I got a severe sense of shame as I missed the only opportunity to render little service to Shree Maharaj.

### *"Footprints of Shree Maharaj"*

*Experiences of Shri Dinanath Nagesh Banavali, Mumbai regarding Sadguru Shree Digambar Das Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj.*

"At Tardeo, Mumbai, Shri G. R. Nayak is in possession of the sacred Padukas of Shree Swami SaMuth in his house. These Padukas were given to his (Nayak's) grand father by Shree Swami Samarth himself. Whenever Shree Maharaj used to be in Mumbai, he used to visit the house of Shri Nayak on thursdays to pay obeisance to the 'Padukas' of Shree Swami Samarth. On a particular thursday, when Shree Maharaj visited the house of Shri Nayak, the Arati (song sung at the time of waving a lamp before a deity) was in progress. Shree Maharaj entered the house, dancing all the way and when he stood in the room before the padukas of Shree Swami Samarth the foot prints of Shree Maharaj were automatically got printed on the floor of the room. Shree Shankar Maharaj also used to visit the same place to pay obeisance to the 'Padukas' of Shree Swami Samarth. On that particular occasion, when the foot prints of Shree Maharaj got automatically printed on the floor, Shree Shankar Maharaj was also present in the room. He saw the foot prints on the floor, and brought it to the notice of Shri Nayak. Shri Nayak took this incident as a blessing from Shree Maharaj."

## "Shree Maharaj is Lord Dattatreya Himself"

*Experiences of Shri Dinanath Nagesh Banavali, Mumbai regarding Sadguru Shree Digambardas Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj.*

"I had the association of Shree Maharaj for 35 years. During this period, I had a divine experience which I would like to narrate.

In February 1957, I had been to Kshetra Ganagapur (Holy place). My Sadguru Shree Vishweshwar Maharaj alias Amma was still alive and I was staying in his (Sadguru's) newly built hermitage. During my stay, I prayed my Sadguru that I desire to have the divine vision of Lord Dattatreya with attributes and qualities of "[Three Heads and Six Hands](#)". Formerly, twice at Gangapur, I had the opportunity to see Shree Swami Nrusimha Saraswati, in divine ascetic form. In one way, I had the direct blessings of Lord Dattatreya only. Even then, since I had a strong desire right from childhood, to have the divine vision of Lord Dattatreya in the form of "Three Heads and Six Hands", I prayed to my Sadguru to fulfill my wish. My Sadguru told me that it would be extremely difficult to have the divine vision in this form, during Kaliyuga (Kali age - the fourth age). Again I prayed to my Sadguru "You are infact Lord Shiva only. Hence I strongly feel it would not be difficult for you to fulfill my desire". My Sadguru said "If you had such unflinching faith, you pray to Lord Dattatreya". Then I said I will go to Sangam confluence (where two rivers meet) and propitiate Lord Dattatreya" and with the blessings of my Sadguru I proceeded to Sangam confluence.

This Sangam confluence is a holy place of Lord Dattatreya. At Sangam, I prayed to Lord Dattatreya for fulfilling my desire of the divine vision in the form of "Three Heads and Six Hands". I observed strict fasting for three days by drinking river water and sleeping in the temple premises.

I had only two short dhoties, one for wearing and one for cleaning the body. I had firmly decided not to return from Sangam till I get the divine vision of Lord Dattatreya. It was the blessings of my Sadguru Shree Vishweshwar Maharaj, that on the third day in the early morning before *Kakad Arati* (chanting praise and waving a lamp of coarse wick of cloth before the deity at dawn) I heard somebody calling me and I woke up. When I opened my eyes, I found the whole room filled with Divine Light and in that Divine Light I got the Divine Vision of Lord Dattatreya in the form of "Three Heads and Six Hands" as desired by me. I got up ecstatically and prostrated before the Lord and laid my head on the feet of the Lord and caught hold of the legs of Lord Dattatreya. I was crying out of happiness and I was so much overpowered by the emotions that I could not utter a single word. After a few seconds, Lord Dattatreya said "Your wish is fulfilled. You be happy now". By saying so, Lord Dattatreya disappeared. Even now, I remember that beautiful moment.

Afterwards, I heard the sound of the *Kakad Arati* and came back to my senses. Then I completed all my morning duties and by then, a messenger from Shree Vishweshwar Maharaj came to call me. I returned to the hermitage of my Sadguru and prostrated before my Sadguru.

My Sadguru Shree Vishweshwar Maharaj said "Your wish is fulfilled. Preserve this experience till the end"

Next day I came back to Mumbai. At that time, Sadguru Shree Digambardas Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj was staying with Shri Pandurangrao Marabilli at Talmaki Wadi, Tardeo, Mumbai. After the office hours, as usual, I went to Talmaki Wadi to take the blessings of Shree Digambardas Maahraj alias Shree Maharaj. At that hour, Shree Maharaj was alone in the room. No sooner I prostrated before him, Shree Maharaj said "Hey, Banavali, what does the Lord Dattatreya say? You saw Lord Dattatreya in this form is it not?" After saying so, Shree Maharaj stood up and showed the same Divine form with "Three

Heads and Six Hands". I had seen the same divine form at Sangam confluence at Gangapur. This was a clear indication that Shree Digambardas Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj was in fact Lord Dattatreya only.

" I am not far away from my Devotees!"

*Experience narrated by Shri Nana Palkar and Shri Shivray Telang regarding Sadguru Shree Digambardas Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj.*

In the year 1957 around March-April, a public meeting of the RSS (Rashtriya Sevak Sangh) was to be held at Nana Chowk, Grant Road, Mumbai. Shri Nana Palkar and Shri Shivray Telang had requested Sadguru Shree Maharaj to attend the meeting.

On the venue of the meeting, Shri Palkar and Shri Telang were seated on the platform along with other members of the RSS. Just before the meeting, Shree Maharaj in his usual dress code ( dhotee, shirt, cap, slippers and umbrella) entered the meeting hall and took a seat right in the front row. Since the meeting was in progress, Shri Palkar and Shri Telang could not get down to pay their respects to Shree Maharaj. Therefore, they bowed their heads with respect right from where they were seated. After about 1-1/2 hour, as soon as the meeting was over, they both stepped down from the platform to meet Shree Maharaj....only to find that he had already left the meeting hall. Disappointed, they both decided to go over to Shri Maraballi's place where Shree Maharaj usually resided during his visits to Mumbai.

It was late in the evening when they reached Shri Maraballi's place at Talamkiwadi, Grant Road, Mumbai. Both, Shri and Smt. Maraballi were surprised to find them there at an odd hour of the day. Shri Maraballi asked them "What brings the two of you here at this odd hour?". Shri Nana Palkar replied, "We could not pay our respect to Shree Maharaj at the meeting, hence we had to come here". Shri Maraballi said in a very surprised tone, "What are you saying? Shree Maharaj is in Pune and not come to Mumbai at all". It was Shri Palkar and Shri Telang's turn to be surprised now. Shri Palkar said, "Sadguru Shree Maharaj was physically present in the meeting place for nearly an hour and a half. Not only that, he was actually sitting right in front of us until the meeting was over. But he left as soon as the meeting was over. That's why we could not talk to him or pay our respects and therefore we decided to come here to meet him. But you are saying that he never came to Mumbai ..... This does not make sense".

The truth at last dawned on Shri Maraballi. He was knowing the greatness of Shree Maharaj and his throat choked by the very fact that this miracle had been performed by Sadguru Shree Maharaj for the sake of his devotees and he (Shri Maraballi) persuaded Shri Palkar and Shri Telang thus. At the end of a thorough enquiry Shri Palkar and Shri Telang realised the truth. By this miraculous incident, Sadguru Shree Maharaj had shown that he is never away from his Devotees

" I am not far away from my Devotees!"

*Experience narrated Shree L.R. Phadke and Smt. Phadke regarding Sadguru Shree Digambardas Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj.*

In the year 1957, Sadguru Shree Maharaj was staying with Shri Maraballi at his Talamkiwadi Residence in Mumbai. Shri L.R. Phadke stayed in the third floor of 'Champa Nivas' building at Dadar, Mumbai. Shree Maharaj would very often visit Shri Phadke at his residence in Dadar.

One morning, Shree Maharaj came over to their house and asked Smt. Phadke to prepare some 'Sheera' for him. Sheera is a sweet item prepared from Cream of Wheat, Sugar and Ghee. Within half an

hour, Smt Phadke served Shree Maharaj with Sheera and a drink. After eating, the couple paid their respects to Shree Maharaj as he got up to leave. Shri Phadke accompanied Shree Maharaj to the staircase to say goodbye. But to his surprise, he did not see Shree Maharaj either leave the building or walk along the road.

The same evening, Shri Phadke came over to Shri Maraballi's residence to visit Shree Maharaj and narrated the above incident. But Shree Maharaj calmly denied saying " I have not left this house for even a moment throughout the day. You can confirm this with Shri and Smt Maraballi. I myself, do not know how this incident took place in your house when I never came to your house to eat Sheera or to have a drink".

Shri Phadke was simply astonished by this miraculous experience. This again, proves his devotees that Shree Maharaj was not a common human being and he obviously was never far away from his devotees

### " Shree Maharaj is Lord Dattatreya "

*Experience narrated by Bhaktashreshtha Shree Walawalkar regarding Sadguru Shree Digambar Das Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj.*

As Shree Walawalkar narrates - ' A few days after my wedding in 1959, I was visiting our village in Konkan (Ratnagiri District) with my wife and in-laws to pray to our family deities. While returning from my village, we took a small halt at Narsobachi Wadi to pray and visit the famous temple of Lord Dattatreya.

The next Bus leaving from Narsobachiwadi was 4 hours later, so I decided to go for a swim in the Krishna river (even though I was not an expert swimmer). As I entered the water, I failed to see the signs on the riverbanks warning visitors of the Whirlpool in the river.

While swimming, I was pulled towards the center of the whirlpool and even before I realized, I was sinking into the water. There were about 50 people around and everybody started to shout '*someone drowned, someone drowned*' ; but no one dared to risk their lives to save mine.

I was atleast one foot below the water surface when I realized that my life was to end in a few seconds. As soon as the thought struck me, I remembered Shree Maharaj and that's when the miracle occurred - From the opposite side of the river bank, a young man, about 17-18 years of age came swimming towards me and pulled me out of the whirlpool and safely out of the river.

To express my gratitude and thank the youth for saving my life, I started to look for my wallet to pay him something. But LO !! the youth had suddenly disappeared. That surprised me and I wondered why this poor villager would leave so suddenly without expecting anything in return from me. Certainly, he could wait for a few more minutes with the person whom he just saved. This incident proved very touching to me.

On my return to Mumbai, I went to visit and pay my respects to Shree Maharaj. Shree Maharaj said, "*You almost drowned at Wadi. It was Lord Dattatreya who saved you but you did not even offer your respects to him*". Hearing that I replied, " I could not recognize the youth as Lord Dattatreya himself". Even when I was saying this, I was certain in my mind that it was nobody else but Shree Maharaj himself, in the form of a youth, who saved me from the jaws of death.'

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### "Shree Maharaj's All Prevading Spirit And Grace"

*Experiences of Bhakta Shreshtha Shree K.L. Walwalkar , Mumbai regarding Sadguru Shree Digambar Das Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj.*

Shree Maharaj had specially told me to get fixed collapsible steel doors at the main door and windows at my flat at Dadar. At the same time he had also told me to hang upon a wall of the drawing room the photograph of Shree Baba Maharaj. Both the things were got done as per the command of Shree Maharaj. The following incidence took place two years, after I got the above things done.

It was Sunday. During the evening time, my wife my nephew Amol who had come early from work. Wife Mrs. Aparan, were watching the Hindi Movie on the T.V. in the last room. Servants had already left. My son, Vikas had gone for a walk alongwith friends. At that time, I was with Shree Maharaj at Pune. Only three members were in the flat. AT that time, two armed thieves entered into our flat, with the intention of committing robbery. They were carrying a bag containing a rope, chilli powder a knife and pistol.

A few minutes before the burglars had entered my flat in Mumbai, at Pune, Shree Maharaj told me to contact my family members on telephone as he wanted to talk to them. Due to the phone call, all the three members came to the drawing room, to attend the telephone, which was close by the main entrance door.

As the collapsible steel door, was not locked due to carelessness, the two thieves gained entry in the drawing through the main door. One thief had a knife pointing to the Amol's chest and other thief had pointed a pistol at my wife's forehead. My wife in a very frightened state looked at Shree Baba's framed Photograph and prayed in her mind." " Oh Baba, what is going on in your house ? Now you alone can take me out of this situation." Soon there was a miracle. She saw a luminous ball of bright light in Shree Baba's photograph. The very sight of the light made her totally fearless and peaceful in mind. Then she started to tell the thief who had pointed a pistol at her "in case you need my ornaments have them. If you want the keys of the safe, have them too". Thus she kept him engaged in such a talk, then started moving slowly towards the door by moving along the side of the door. The thief thought that she was trying to go out of the door and hence he pressed the door tightly. Though her back was towards the light switchboard, my wife could not press any mistake the emergency switch on the switch board. As a result of pressing this, emergency switch , a warning bell which we had fixed in the neighbouring flat as an emergency measure started ringing loudly. That sound created utter confusion in the minds of the thieves. Fearing that our neighbours would rush to our flat to help us, the thieves dropped their bag and took to their heels. A great ordeal was over and all my family members heaved a sigh of relief.

When we thought over the incident peacefully, we realised how Shree Maharaj had foreseen that incident years back and knew in advance even the minutest details of the events which were to place. Well, the instructions regarding the collapsible steel door was clear. Shree Baba's photograph, which had been fixed, in the drawing room, on the insistence of Shree Maharaj, had in fact provided my wife the needed courage to press the emergency switch. My nephew had also come early unexpectedly on that day. Certainly Shree Maharaj's inspiration was behind it. It was Shree Maharaj command, I telephoned from Pune and all members came to the drawing room from the last, to attend the telephone.

From the above, it can be seen that the invisible hand of Shree Maharaj was working to remove all the difficulties. It was Shree Maharaj's all pervading spirit and grace that had protected us.

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### *"The Omniscience And Omnipresence Of Shree Maharaj"*

*Experiences of Bhakta Shreshtha Shree K.L. Walwalkar , Mumbai regarding Sadguru Shree Digambardas Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj.*

This incident took place in 1984. My C.A. Shri Parekh and myself were about to leave for Pune from Mumbai, to attend to some official work. Before starting for Pune, I telephoned Shree Maharaj and told him that I would be coming to Pune by Car Shree Maharaj asked "who is going to drive the Car ?" As usual I shall drive it". I replied. There was a pause of few seconds and Shree Maharaj said "well, you come, Swami will protect". I thought. " For the last twenty years since 1964, I myself used to drive my car. But due to Shree Maharaj's grace I never met with any accident. Shree Maharaj had never asked me as to who would drive the car. There how is it that he asked about it only today ? However, since Shree Maharaj had permitted us, we left for pune. In order to be able to reach Pune in time, I was driving the car at a speed of 80 km per hour. The car horn was not functioning properly when we were about 20 kms away from Pune, two bicycle riders were on our left pedaling their bicycles. I sounded the horn, and one of the cyclists suddenly turned to the right side and in the twinkling of an eye, I found him right in front of my car. I could not apply the brakes and the bicycle hit the bonnet. The bicycle rides first dashed against the front glass screen and then fell to the right side of the road. It was really a wonder that he was totally unhurt. In fact the fault was his only. At that time, some goons gathered near the car with the intention of making a capital out of the accident and extorting money from me. Then I thought that I was in trouble. But in a moment, some officer of the Bajaj company who was a witness to that accident came then on a motor bike and engaged the goons in some argument, trying to prove how I was not in wrong. When that was going on, I left the place along with the cyclist, in my car, without being noticed by the goons and went straight to the police station. The police noted the statement of the bicycle rider and to my surprise he gave in writing that the accident took place entirely due to his fault and there was no fault with the driver of the car. It was totally Shree Maharaj's blessings that the cyclist gave a truthful statement. Further inspite of this accident, my car had not suffered any damage.

I reached Pune with broken glass screen of the car. But Shree Maharaj did not utter a single word regarding the accident. The way in which he had made inquires on telephone clearly indicated that he had the premonition of it. At the time of difficulty he stood by me and took me out of it. This event proved his omniscience and omnipresence.

### *"Swami Samarth Saved You, Else You Would Have Been Dead"*

*Experience of Shri Vikas Kamalakar Walawalkar, Dadar, Mumbai regarding Sadguru Shree Digambardas Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj.*

This incident happened during the year 1972. My mother and myself were in the house. It was about 9 PM to 9.30 PM at nighttime. My mother was working in the kitchen. While cooking in the kitchen, she came out and said ' something strange is happening to me' by saying so she lied on the cot. She was finding difficulty in breathing.

I gave her the medicines known to me but there was no improvement. I thought this problem to be something else than the normal sickness, and hence I called our neighbour Shri Tendulkar kaka(uncle) and his family. They came and immediately the doctor was called. The doctor, took the Blood Pressure and other health indicators. He even took the cardiogram(E.C.G.) and prescribed the medicines. We gave the medicines and the doctor was waiting outside. My mother was half insensible and muttering something 'I am experiencing something strange. I am feeling some strange thing moving in the whole

body and again coming back towards my heart. While breathing also I feel some strange thing is moving inside and then coming out’.

I became completely nervous; and suddenly remembered Shree Maharaj. I wanted to ring up and inform Shree Maharaj at Pune with complete details. But I was hesitating; since the family restrictions did not permit me to trouble Shree Maharaj with minor problems and I was sitting helpless. My mother, in the half insensible condition itself started muttering ‘Vikas inform Shree Maharaj immediately. Something serious is happening to me’. After hearing, I became more nervous. I knew the habit of my mother to endure herself all her body sufferings without informing anybody in the house. Today the same mother herself was asking me to ring up Pune’s number and inform Shree Maharaj about her sufferings. So I was more and more confused. But I rang up immediately the Pune’s number.

Shree Maharaj was taking his dinner. Somebody else took the telephone. Through him, Shree Maharaj gave instructions ‘Tell Vikas not to worry. Take one coconut and wave it around the mothers body three times and take the coconut downstairs and break the ‘same’.

I felt happy because Shree Maharaj had given me a remedy. Now the doctor was not required. Instantly I recovered myself as my fear had vanished.

As per the suggestion of Shree Maharaj, I took a coconut and waved it around the entire body of my mother three times and went downstairs and broke the coconut but I was perplexed as to throw the coconut entirely or bring one part home? Since, as per the suggestions of Shree Maharaj for a number of years, I used to break a coconut on every new moon day, downstairs, on a particular spot and bring home one part of the coconut. But today, the coconut had been waved around the entire body of my mother and I was perplexed. I felt like throwing away the complete coconut, but what about the prasad (food offered to deity). I would have to bear the blame for throwing away the Prasad. If I take home one part of the coconut, the particular spirit, for which the coconut was waved around body of my mother, would again enter the house. Hence, I was puzzled.

Ultimately I made up my mind and threw away one part of the coconut and took the second part upstairs and kept the same near the staircase portion outside our flat, so that, it could be either taken inside our flat if required or could be thrown out easily. By doing so I came home and sat quietly.

Even after half an hour, there was no improvement in the condition of my mother. I was full of anxiety. Suddenly, our telephone started ringing. I answered the telephone. Shree Maharaj himself had rang up. He said ‘Vikas, again you take one coconut, you wave it around the body of Malu(my mother) and take it downstairs and break it and throw both parts and do not bring home any part of the coconut. Your mother would be all right’.

Without delay I did as suggested by Shree Maharaj. I waved a fresh coconut around the body of my mother and took it downstairs and broke the same and threw away both parts and came up. After 15-20 minutes my mother recovered fully and she prepared meals and even served me. Is this not a miracle of Shree Maharaj?

In the first instance, when I had not told any body, in the building or even at Pune about the part of the coconut brought upstairs and kept at the staircase. But was there anything, which the All-Witnessing Shree Maharaj cannot perceive? Shree Maharaj had understood my absurdity and he took the pains to ring up again on our telephone. I was ashamed and from my heart I saluted Shree Maharaj.

During 1986, I had come to Pune for the festival in the Muth (Temple-Shrine). After the festival was over, Shree Maharaj made me to stay in the Muth (Mutt) for few days. One day he called me and said ‘you have to of to Mumbai tomorrow morning. You will have to bring one boy Subodh Date who is staying at Andheri, Mumbai to Pune’.

Hence, I decided to go to Mumbai in the morning, then go to Andheri (Mumbai), bring Subodh Date to Dadar, and return to Pune along with Date by evening. Next day morning at 7 am, I took the blessings of Shree Maharaj, and started for Mumbai along with Shrinivas Moghe and our attendant Shri Yashwant Jadhav in a fiat car MFA 1404, I myself was driving the car.

We crossed khopoli, Patalganga and going towards Panvel. It was about 10.15 am. The road between khopoli and Panvel had different one-way routes created for incoming and outgoing vehicles at different places. But these one way routes disappear suddenly in between and all the vehicles were forced to use the common road. Even due to the bad road conditions at certain places also, the vehicles were forced to use the common road.

We were going along the one-way road and that too on the left track of the road. A very few vehicles were running ahead of our car as well as on the rear side. But there was heavy traffic along Mumbai-Pune route including a number of trucks carrying goods and running at full speed. Slowly and slowly, I came to such a place about 200ft away from the actual spot where the different one-way route arrangement was to stop and only the two-way road (one for incoming and other for outgoing vehicles between Mumbai-Pune) was to start when I was about to enter this two-way road, suddenly, a bus of Reliance company came speeding fast, facing me along the same route, as I was proceeding, ahead the bus, had entered our route wrongly, instead of following its correct route, probably to save time.

In fact, one track on my right side was vacant, as I was driving on the left side of that vacant track. The Reliance bus could have passed me from the vacant track on my right side but that track was under repairs and big stones were kept in the track. The Reliance bus driver realised this late and as his bus was speeding very fast, there was no possibility at all for applying brakes and hence he diverted the bus along my track, and facing my car. The bus was coming at a very great speed facing my car along the same track and there was only a gap of 100feet between my car and his bus, facing each other. The situation was so bad, as I was not about to take my car to my left side, due to the fields at a very low level and the right side of the track was closed for repairs. I was put in a dangerous and precarious position and I felt my death was nearing me in the form of that speeding bus. Even if I had applied brake, the accident was certain. In fact, I was facing sure death.

Since the distance between my car and the speeding bus facing me was only about 100 feet no time was left for me to reduce the speed and out of fear without any alternative I diverted the car to the right track which was under repair and my car came on such a spot between the incoming and outgoing vehicles. Due to the spread out of sand in that spot my speeding car, slipped in the sand, turned upside down, whirled, and stopped. Now my car turned upside down was facing towards Pune instead of Mumbai. Infact, the Reliance bus, driver did not even stop the bus out of extreme fear and went away along the left track of the road, which was being used by me.

This incident took place so instantly that I was totally confused. I only remembered that particular moment when I was about to enter the jaws of death. When I realised that I was still alive, I started worrying for my two companions, assuming that something worst might have happened to them and out of fear I slowly looked to my side. But fortunately, my both companions were perfectly all right and I heaved a sigh of relief. All three came out of the car, which turned upside down. Many people crowded near my car, Luckily there was a petrol pump nearby with a telephone. I rang up my father and he was available at home. Even luck favored me and I got the connection in first attempt, as during that time, it used to take a number of attempts to get the connection and even my father

was available. I gave my father all the details about my coming to Mumbai as well as about the accident. My father arranged to pick up Subodh Date from Andheri, and arranged to send him in another car to Panvel. Till the arrival of the car we waited in Shri Moghe's house at Panvel.

From Panvel, we all came in the second car, to the spot where the accident took place. I would never be able to forget the sight of that accident in my life. Our car was lying there with four wheels facing the sky. All the people present at the accidental spot, certainly felt that nobody can escape death from that serious accident., Miraculously none of us even got a single scratch. We all moved the car and set it on its wheels. The body of the car, was completely damaged and even in that damaged condition, the engine of the car started working. We handed over this damaged car to the driver who came from Mumbai and then we proceeded to Pune in the second car.

By the time we reached the temple shrine (Mutt) at Pune, it was about 4.30pm in the evening. Shree Maharaj was taking afternoon rest. When he woke up, we all paid obeisance to him and then I started telling him 'we were late as our car dashed against another vehicle a little'. Immediately, Shree Maharaj exclaimed "*it is good that Shree Swami Samarth saved you, otherwise, by now, you would have been dead! Whatever happened was for the good, Now you can go !*" By the grace of Shree Maharaj, I had the opportunity to remember the saying during my lifetime that "Death had come but Time was not correct" (we had a narrow escape from disaster).

It was certain and there was no doubt that the omniscient and omnipresent Shree Maharaj, only, could pull us out safely from the jaws of death.

### *"I Am The Same Person Whom You Saw In Your Dream"*

*Experiences of Smt. Malati Kamalakar Walawalkar, Dadar, Mumbai regarding Sadguru Shree Digambar Das Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj.*

This incident took place during the year 1956-57. At that time we were staying at Girgaum, Charni Road Rly station, Mumbai. I was not married. One night I got a vision of a saintly person in my dream. I had never seen this saintly person earlier anywhere. I did a lot of thinking to know the whereabouts of this saintly person but did not succeed. Ultimately I thought that our family-deity might have manifested in the form of a saintly person, and abandoned the subject.

After sometime, I got an opportunity to meet Shree Maharaj . While paying obeisance to him, I looked at him and I was simply astonished because Shree Maharaj was the same saintly person whose vision I saw in my dream. I said 'Shree Maharaj , I'. Before I completed the sentence, Shree Maharaj said ' Yes,I was the same person whom you saw in your dream'.I was simply astounded as well as happy also, because the person who gave me the vision in my dream was sitting before me and was a great saint and his words gave me the instant perception of his greatness, Omnipresence and all-witnessing knowledge. My implicit faith in Shree Maharaj started growing up day by day in his association during the last 34 years.

During the year 1968 my maternal home was in Girgaum, near Charni Road railway station, Mumbai. One family by name Shri & Smt Wakade was our neighbour at that time. The husband and wife were very pious with absolute faith in the Lord Shiva. Daily both were meditating on Lord Shiva. One day Shri Wakade Kaka(uncle) spoke to me 'make as per the doctor, your aunt(Smt. Wakade kaku) is having a tumour in her head. It has to be operated I am afraid. Please ask your Shree Maharaj about his advice.'

Shri Wakade kaka was aware of my going to Shree Maharaj for the advice of Shree Maharaj , I went to Byculla, (Mumbai) as Shree Maharaj , in those days always Used to put up in the house of Shri Vasantrao Pandit at Byculla. When I informed Shree Maharaj about Smt Wakade Kaku, he told me to come the next day. Next day again I went to Shree Maharaj at Byculla. At that time Shree Maharaj said 'Malu, there is sufficient religious merit accumulated in the account of Smt. Wakade. Hence, she need not

worry for any thing. The operation can be carried out without any fear. She will be perfectly okay.' I informed Shri Wakade Kaka(uncle) the opinion of Shree Maharaj . A few days after this operation was carried out. It was a difficult operation and it went on for nine hours. But Smt. Wakade kaku(aunt) did not feel any trouble and the tumour was taken out. Next day when Shree Maharaj asked me about the well-being of Smt Wakade, I told him ' Shree Maharaj , by your kind grace, the operation was successful, and Smt Wakade kaku is perfectly okay. Only she is getting a severe headache'. Shree Maharaj said 'Malu, do not worry. Here downstairs, there is one Cordage Plant( Panphuti or Ghaypat plant). You take two leaves of that plant and keep them on the head of Smt Wakade and she will start feeling better'. By merely keeping two leaves of Cordage plant on the head, the elimination of the severe headache of the post-operation, was simply improbable. But a miracle took place. By so doing the severe headache of Smt Wakade kaku vanished for-ever. Till she lived, she did not get the headache.

After this , two-three years passed. Smt. Wakade kaku , one day, expressed her worry about the future of her youngest son and said ' I do not know at to what will happen to this boy after me. Malu, I am worried about him. Please ask Shree Maharaj '.I referred this matter to Shree Maharaj . Shree Maharaj said immediately 'Malu, Smt Wakade is having enough religious merit inher store. You tell her not worry . Her son will improve and prosper in life. He will get married in time your Wakade kaku is having enough lifetime in balance. At the last moment of her life also, she will leave this world by merely feeling giddy and without any pains.

Some more years passed and by 1986 the tumour of Smt Wakade again grew up necessitating second operation. But it was a difficult situation. As per the doctor, the second operation might cause the death of the patient or insanity. In fact the doctor was not hopeful in carrying out the operation successfully. Hence the doctor asked Smt Wakade for her last wish and she said ' till the last moment I should be able to repeat the name of Shree Swami Samarth and this is my wish'.

When the operation was over, the doctor Bhagwati was extremely surprised as the operation was totally successful beyond his expectation. The patient recovered immediately just as in an ordinary operation and was perfectly normal. There was no necessity of keeping the patient in an ICU inspite of the operation of the tumour in the head for the second time. Further there was no headache even which normally happens in the tumour operation.

After the second operation, Smt Wakade kaku was keeping good health and used to pass her time in devotional activities. As predicted by Shree Maharaj , her youngest son, about whom she was worried, got married and got a son and was leading a happy family life.

During 1973-74, Shree Maharaj used to put up in the Muth (temple-shrine) of Shree Baba Maharaj at Dadar, Mumbai.

One day myself, my maternal sister-in-law, Smt Revati Mahajan and one lady from our building had been to Shree Maharaj for his blessings. It was afternoon time. Shree Maharaj was sitting quietly. As usual, we went in the temple-shrine of Shree Baba Maharaj and took blessings from the samadhi of Shree Baba Maharaj and then paid due obeisance to Shree Maharaj and when about to be seated, Shree Maharaj himself started remarking "*some devotees come here and plead me to save their eyesight's*"

" Some of the devotees when they get married into the family of upper Brahmin caste do not follow the proper customs of the family and start eating non-vegetarian food and lower themselves morally "

" and some devotees plead me for complete protection of their family along with their worries "

When Shree Maharaj spoke about these different subjects, we could not follow the context of these three remarks immediately. But when we left the Math, after taking the blessings from Shree

Maharaj and came out we discussed amongst us about the three remarks in detail. Then we understood the context which was as follows:-

About two to four days before hand, my maternal sister-in-law, Smt Revati Mahajan had developed some serious eye problem. When she approached the doctor for the check up, she became very nervous, under the presumption that she had to undergo an eye-operation, she pleaded Shree Maharaj to look after her eyesight as well as her health. Hence, the first remark of Shree Maharaj pertained to Smt Revati Mahajan.

The second remark pertained to the lady of our building who accompanied us. Though non-brahmin, she had married a Brahmin, but failed to observe the Brahmin customs. She induced her Brahmin husband to eat non-vegetarian food and drink liquor.

The third remark referred to me only because, the previous night, my husband and my son had gone out of Mumbai and I was alone and afraid. Hence I stood before the photo of Shree Maharaj and prayed 'Shree Maharaj , please take the welfare of my husband, my son and myself under your control. There is nobody else to look after us'.

As per me, the above three remarks, Shree Maharaj could make by being at the Muth only since he had, beyond all doubts, the intuitive knowledge as well as the all witnessing nature.

Once, I had been to Shree Maharaj , at Pune, on the day of the festival, Shree Maharaj asked me ' Malu, did I come in your dream?' I could not remember anything. I was confused. By seeing my confused state of mind, Shree Maharaj spoke 'Malu, don't you remember that day, I fed you with my own hand, the curd-rice'.

After hearing his words, I suddenly remembered my dream, which I got a few days back. Shree Maharaj had come in my dream. I was having my meal along with other people. At that time, Shree Maharaj had fed me the curd-rice with his own hands. I had not told about this dream to anybody. In fact, I myself forgot about this dream. But I recollected the same dream, when Shree Maharaj reminded me about the same at Pune. Dreams are not false. I was so happy when I realised that Shree Maharaj himself fed me in my dream and hence I salute with full sincerity the omniscient and divinely Shree Maharaj.

It was November month in the year 1988. I was in Pune at that time. I realised that Shree Maharaj was suffering from severe pain in his legs. Still he appeared to be in happy mood. I became very sad when I observed that even Shree Maharaj with divinity had to undergo physical pain.

Shree Maharaj read my mind and said '*Malu, when a needy man comes to you, as it necessitates you to give him some money so also, I suffer the pain and sickness of my devotees whoever approaches me. This pain in my legs is also one of such cases pertaining to that devotee who is walking outside safely at present*'. This case referred to Shri Nirokhekar a devotee, standing outside who fell from a scooter and got his legs injured, and this pain and injury Shree Maharaj accepted on behalf of Shri Nirokhekar. This might be a ground as to why a great saint like Shree Maharaj has been considered to be superior to god. My heart was simply overflowing with gratitude, when I realised that purely on compassionate grounds Shree Maharaj was to suffer pain and sorrow on behalf of his devotees.

*"You Still Have To Dance For A Number Of Years"*

*Experiences of Shri Uddav Khandekar Mumbai regarding Sadguru Shree Digambardas Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj.*

I met Shree Maharaj during 1947-48 in our village Khanu through my elderly brother Bapurao. Shree Maharaj had close friendly relations with Shri Bapurao, Shri Dattopant Joshi also from village Khanu and Dr. Mirashi from Village Pawas.

Whenever Shree Maharaj used to come to Mumbai, he used to stay in the Mulay boarding house in front of Dadar Railway Station, and I used to go there to meet Shree Maharaj for his blessings. Afterwards, year 1953 onwards Shree Maharaj used to stay in the house of Shri Pandurangrao Marballi at Talmakkiwadi, Tardeo, Grant Road, Mumbai. Shree Maharaj had maintained his temple in our house of Khanu for a few years.

My financial position was just satisfactory. I was serving in Morarjee Gokuldas Mill. While in service, my pay rise was topped but the same was restored by the blessings of Shree Maharaj. During the year 1973, when I underwent through a stomach operation, Shree Maharaj came to the hospital, blessed me with encouragement and staid "*Do not get worried. You still have to dance a number of years with the flag of Shree Baba Maharaj.*" This encouragement he gave me because during those years, I used to dance every year in front of the palanquin of Shree Baba Maharaj with his flag during the birthday celebrations.

A few days after the operation, the stitches of the wound were broken and there was a extremely serious problem. Fortunately my brother-in-law Dr. Haribhau Athalye realised this problem and he took a quick action and I was saved from the dangerous problems. I strongly felt that the blessings of Shree Maharaj with full assurance of protection had saved my life. As I was knowing the art of massaging the body, due to my habit of doing exercise, I got a number of chances of rendering service to Shree Maharaj by massaging his body. This also was a blessing from Shree Maharaj only whom I have respected as my sadguru (preceptor)

### *"With A Poisonous Snake On My Back ... I Survived"*

*Experiences of Late Raghunath Keshav Joshi, Mumbai regarding Sadguru Shree Digambardas Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj.*

I met Shree Maharaj around the year 1935-37. At that time, Shree Maharaj had not attained any publicity and he was in Ratnagiri. At that time, my brother Shri Dattopant Joshi was having a tailoring shop on Ratnagiri. He was a well known tailor and even a European collector used to come to his shop for stitching clothes. Shri Dattopant Joshi was virtuous and had a spiritual tending Shree Maharaj used to come to his shop. Soon after the birth of my father, my grand father expired and my grand mother had to come to Ratnagiri with the child for her maintenance.

The grand father of Shree Maharaj had told her " You stay in our house, look after your child and give him due education and do not worry for anything." But my grandmother was very firm and said " I will not stay here free of charge." The grand father of Shree Maharaj gave her one room in the house for her use and for her maintenance, he arranged four to five clients so that she can provide meals to these clients on monthly basis. My father completed his education under such extremely difficult circumstances and successfully became a Mamlatdar (Taluka Magistrate) in Revenue Department. He was having first class judiciary powers. My father and Shree Maharaj's father used to meet atleast once in a day, as they were very close to each other. My father was in Ratnagiri for 12-13 years and 8-10 years in Rajapur. When he was in Ratnagiri, he used to go to the house of Shree Maharaj which was in Parya's lane. He used to go directly to the kitchen and talk to the grandmother of Shree Maharaj and drink curry given by the grandma. This is what Shree Maharaj used to tell.

At that time, we were staying in the rental house owned by Shri Krishna Joshi in the lower lane. The built up house was having four rooms, in the ground floor and with a spacious hall in the upper floor. Whenever Shree Maharaj came to our house, he used to wash his hands as well as feet with warm water and go to the hall at the upper floor. Then next morning only he used to come down. He used to tell us about spiritualism. In the morning, after bath, he used to come at about 8.00 A.M. to the tailoring shop, which was in a corner and where he used to meet a number of respectable people including a European Officers from Collector's Office.

Once when I was sitting with Shree Swami Swaroopanand after the meals, he told me "Take out the Abhangh (stanzas) by saying so, Shree Swami Swaroopanand went to the toilet. When he returned from toilet, I heard him repeating the same Abhangh (stanzas) which I had taken out ! It was a handwritten copy which I had taken out. After this incident, Shree Maharaj got that handwritten copy published as "Abhangh Jnaneshwari".

Few months after I receive the spiritual anugrah (initiation), I used to get enormous sound inside the inner portion of the ear. Hence I was not able to hear anybody speaking to me in the Collector's Office. As a result of this, the Collector declared me deaf and transferred me to Dapoli. Hence I stopped the meditation for some period. Whenever I sit for meditation, I used to see saints and pious people. After few days, I was again transferred to another place known as Kudal, where I got a Government bungalow with seven to eight rooms, for my stay. Once it so happened that when I sat for meditation after taking bath, I felt some wet thing on my back I thought it to be my sacred thread (a cord with three strings worn over the left shoulder and under the right by Twice Born Hindu men) and did not pay much attention to it. But after one and half to two hours I started to realise the wetness more strongly. Then I tried to find out the cause of that wetness. Lo ! It was a poisonous snake. I suddenly removed the snake with my hand and threw it away. It was certainly a miraculous escape from death only because of the kind grace of Shree Maharaj.

"I Have Given You Everthing, There Is Nothing To Give Now "

*Experiences of Ved Murthy (Learned Priest) Laxman Vinayak Sapre Guruji (Priest) Pune regarding Sadguru Shree Digambar Das Maharaj alias Shree Maharaj.*

My first meeting with Shree Maharaj took place some where in the month of Bhadrapad (September – October) of 1957. At that time, there was a vacancy of a priest in the Pune Muth (temple shrine) of Shree Baba Maharaj. My brother-in-law Ved Murthy (learned Priest) Bhaskar Dattatreya Karambalekar, priest took me to Shree Maharaj .

After 2-3 days of the above meeting, I started coming to the Muth (temple-shrine) for performing pooja (religious service) in the Muth (temple-shrine). From that day onwards till today, I continue to come to the Muth for religious service.

After the Panshet inundation (flood) at Pune, I was saved by Shree Maharaj only from the extreme circumstances. He used to say "I will show you the mirror". Further, he told me to discontinue the relations with brothers and sisters temporarily. By doing so I could understand their inner motive. After fifteen days he told me to restore the relations, if desired by me. But during those fifteen days whatever experience I got was certainly a lesson Shree Maharaj wanted to teach me.

At present, whatever excellent state we are having was entirely due to Shree Maharaj only. While worshipping one's preceptor on the full moon day (Poornima) of Ashadha month (month of July-August)

he used to say "I have given you everything. Now there is nothing worthy to give" But till now I have not understood the meaning of above.



### **Part III**

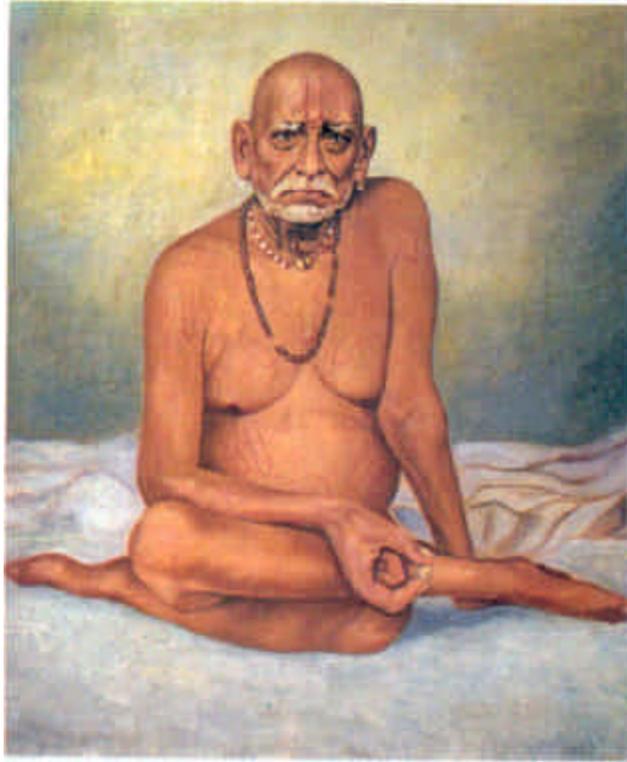
*Pictures and Illustrations ...*

*Pictures of:  
Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj,  
the Swaroop Sampradaya,  
Jayanti Utsav  
& more ...*

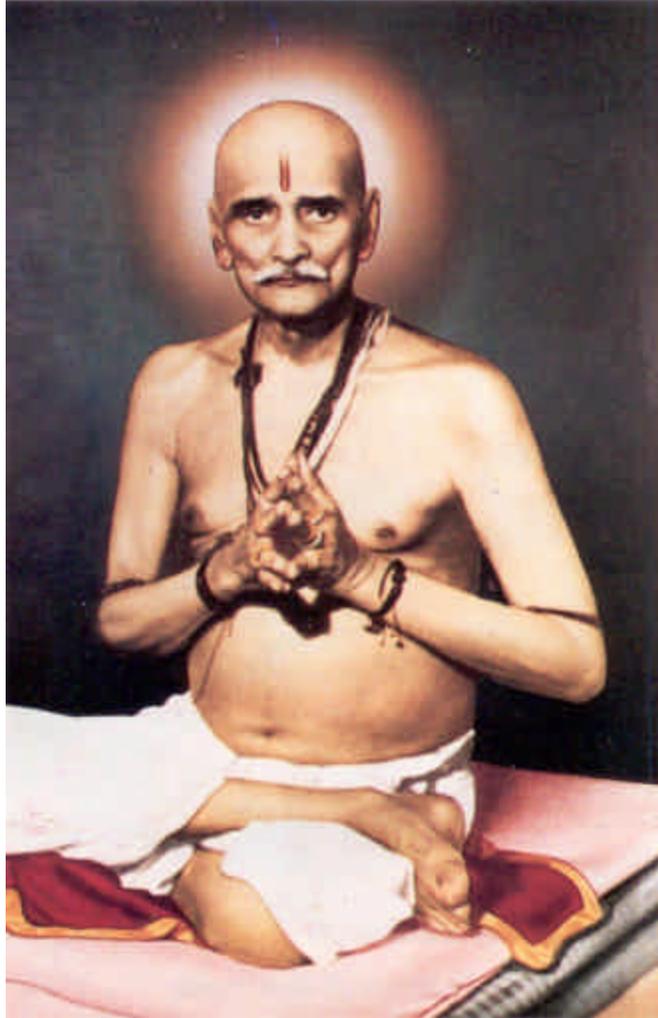
## Pictures and illustrations



Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj



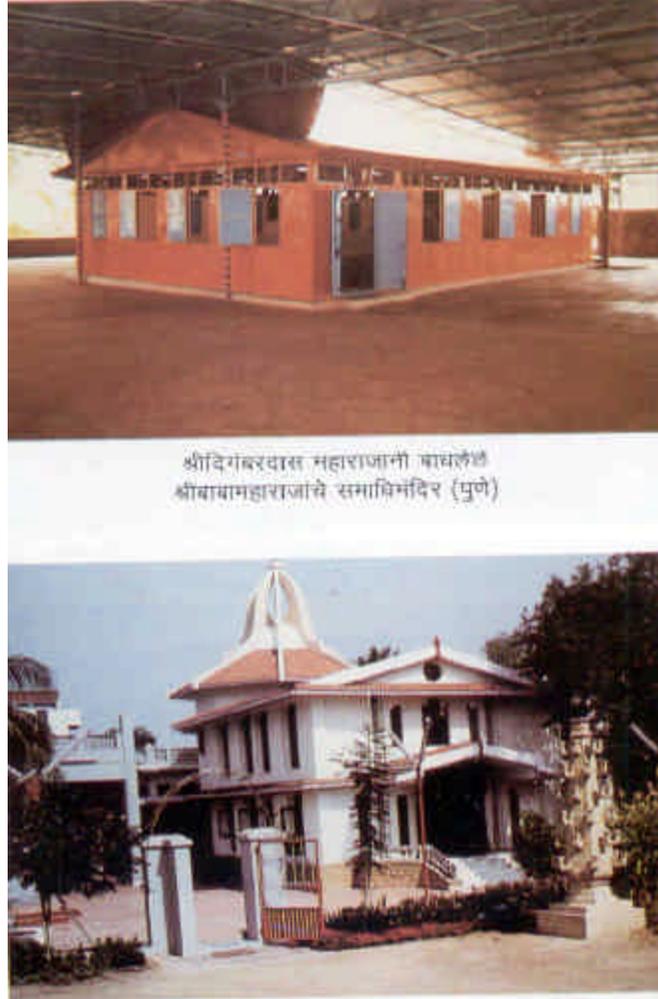
Akkalkot Niwasi Shree Swami Samarth



Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj



Shree Sadguru Digambar Das Maharaj, *Satshishya* of Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe.



Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe Samadhi Mandir, Pune  
Constructed by his Satshishya Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj

## Swaroop Sampradaya

Bhagwan Dattatreya



Akkalkot Niwasi Shree Swami Samarth



Shree Ramanand Beedkar Maharaj

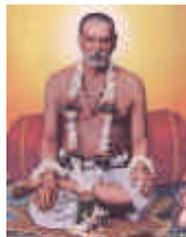


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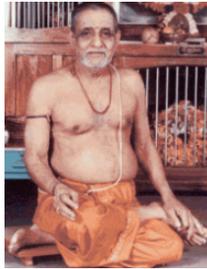
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(Shree Beedkar Maharaj)

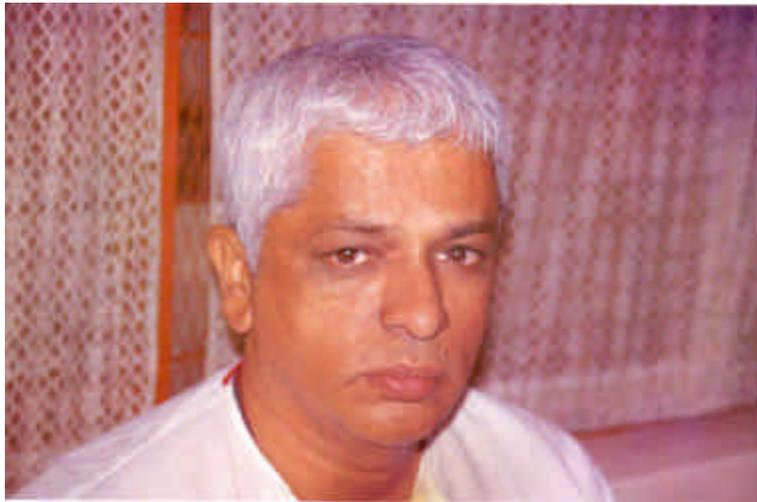
Shree Sadguru Raosaheb Sahasrabuddhe



Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj



Shree Sadguru Kaka Maharaj (Shri Ashok Raghunath Joshi)  
Satshishya of Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj



*(Current Successor)*

## Glossary

1	Swaroop Sampradaya	A sect, wherein the aspirant concentrates on viewing the 'Atman' – the soul
2	Shaktipat	Ancient method of awakening and activating the <i>Kundalini</i> energy in the shortest possible time.
3	Videhi	Disembodied State
4	Muth	Hermitage (Temple Shrine)
5	Tapasya	Penance
6	Satya Yuga	The rule based on religion and justice
7	Nirguna Parabrahma	The Infinite, formless Supreme Lord
8	Sadguru	Preceptor
9	Samadhi Mandir	A temple-shrine dedicated to a Saint after he leaves his body
10	Kartik Poornima	Also known as, Tripuri Poornima. Full moon day of the Kartik month in the year 1805 as per Hindu Calendar.
11	Yogi	Ascetic
12	Rudraksh	A berry of a sacred tree ( tree sacred to Lord Shiva )
13	Siddhis	Spiritual accomplishments and Divine powers
14	Peon	Administrative assistant
15	Saheb	Boss. Appended to the name of a respected person, as a mark of respect, in Indian society.
16	Bhakti	Unflinching Faith or Devotion
17	Chiplya	A pair of sticks used by devotees to clap together
18	Ektari	One stringed musical instrument
19	Omkareshwar	One of the names of Lord Shiva
20	Remgeeta	Book on Lord Rama
21	Leela	Divine game plan.
22	Kashi-Vishveshwara	Another name of Lord Shiva
23	Guruji	Teacher
24	Hanuman	Monkey god. Lord Rama's true devotee. Regarded as a symbol true devotion.
25	Gotra	Family lineage
26	Kirtankar Bua	The narrator of a topic about Hanuman punctuated by Music. Could be narration of any spiritual topic. Bua = Person
27	Dakshina	Money granted to a Brahman for religious service
28	Hoe	A garden tool
29	Dhotee	The traditional Indian cotton garment of males worn around the waist passing under and tucked behind.
30	Laddus	Sweet balls
31	Kartik Poornima	Full moon day of Kartik month i.e. 8th month as per Hindu calendar and November or December as per English calendar
32	Unmani Avastha	Divine contemplation
33	Guru	Spiritual Preceptor
34	Vedmurthy	A learned Brahman
35	Agnihotri	A Brahman who maintains sacred fire
36	Arani-Mantha	Wooden piece used for kindling fire by rubbing against another instrument Arani
37	Jnana Vairagya	Knowledge of all spiritual and religious kind which teaches man the divine origin, as well as, the nature of his immaterial portion, including the unreality of corporal enjoyments, sufferings. It also sanctifies him during life, from earthly attachments, fleshy affections, and accomplishes for him after death, emancipation from individual existence accompanied by the reunion with universal spirit and finally with the renunciation of all sensuous gratification.

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38	Satshishya	True disciple
39	Ashadh month	Month of July as per English calendar
40	Shodashopchar worship	Sixteen ways of paying homage to a deity
41	Jalasadhi	Ending bodily existence by drowning in water
42	Mahasamadhi	The Last conscious communion with God
43	Exorcist	One who expels evil spirit by invocation
44	Hurda	Parched corn of tender pods
45	Padmasan	Lotus position
46	Angara	Sacred ashes recovered from the incense burnt before the deity or Sadguru
47	Brahma	The Divine substance
48	Naamsmaran	Internal repetition/ chanting of God's name
49	Yamaraj	God of Death as per Hindu belief.
50	Seva Mandal	A society for religious service. Mandal = Society.
51	Jyotiba	Another name of Lord Shiva.
52	Mansion	Large old house
53	Samadhi	Tomb
54	Nathpant	A certain order of a religious sect
55	Nandi	Nandi is the bull on which Lord Shiva rides
56	Jotishibua	Astrologer. Jyotish = Astrology. Bua = person.
57	Kamadhenu	A Cow yielding all desires
58	Kalpataru	A desire yielding tree
59	Chintamani	A gem yielding anything desired
60	Sheshshai	The thousand hooded snake
61	Narali Poornima	Coconut day - falls on full moon day of Shravan month as per Hindu calendar and August month as per English Calendar
62	Chowpati	Sea beach at Charni Road, Mumbai
63	Sadhana	Spiritual Practice
64	Dherpotya	Pot bellied.
65	Kirtan	Narration of topic punctuated by music
66	Tonga	Horse Carriage
67	Tongawallah	The driver of the horse carriage.

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## Temple Information

### **Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe Samadhi Mandir & Shree Sadguru Digambar Das Maharaj Samadhi Mandir**

937 / D, Chatushrungi Road,  
Near Dnyaneshwar Paduka Chowk, Shivajinagar,  
PUNE  
Pin Code : 411 016.  
Maharashtra State  
INDIA  
Phone : 020-5655021  
Timings : 06.30 A.M. to 11.00 A.M. and 03.30 P.M. to 06.00 P.M. (IST)

### **Akkalkot-Niwasi Shree Swami Samarth Mandir**

Shree Swami Samarth Nagar,  
Off Four Bungalows, Andheri (West),  
MUMBAI  
Pin Code : 400 053  
Maharashtra State  
INDIA  
Phone : 022 - 633 30 30  
Timings : 06.00 A.M. to 11.00 A.M. and 04.00 P.M. to 09.00 P.M. (IST).

### **Shri Shiv-Samarth Gad and Temple Campus**

Shri Kshetra Dervan, Tal.

Chiplun, Dist. RATNAGIRI

Pin Code : 415 606

Maharashtra State

INDIA

Phone : 02355-34049

Timings :

Gad - 08.00 A.M. to 06.00 P.M. (IST)

Temples - 08.00 A.M. to 12.00 Noon and 02.00 P.M. to 06.00 P.M. (IST) Shri Kshetra Dervan - located on Durgawadi road, 3 kms. from Savarde.

Savarde - a village on Mumbai - Goa highway, 16 Kms. from Chiplun

## References

1. *“Tuchi Baap Dhani”*

[Marathi Biography of Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj]